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AN INTRODUCTION

TO THE

HISTORY OF CHINESE PICTORIAL ART

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TO

MABEL

EDITH

KATHLEEN

ESBELL

PREFACE.

This is the first attempt which has been made so far, in any European language, to deal, even cursorily, with the history of Chinese pictorial art. The Chinese themselves have produced scores of volumes on the history and practice of painting, but there has been little, if any, direct appeal to these works—certainly nothing in the way of translation—on the part of the few foreigners who have written, all too briefly, on the subject. The latter have always regarded Chinese paintings from an outside—one might almost add “barbarian”—point of view, and have judged them strictly according to European canons; while writers upon the history of art in general have been prone either to dismiss China in a few contemptuous words, or to ignore it—a wiser proceeding—altogether.

M. Paléologue, in *L'Art Chinois* (1887), has given a slight sketch, which however can scarcely claim to be historical, of the pictorial branch of his subject, always as it appeared to him, and not in relation to the native artist or connoisseur.

Professor Hirth has ably dealt with one line of investigation in his *Ueber Fremde Einflüsse in der Chinesischen Kunst* (1896), and some years ago projected a work in German which would have rendered the present volume superfluous.

Dr. Wilhelm Lübke in his portly *Outlines of the History of Art* (1904) devotes only a scant page or two to that art which has influenced so many hundreds of millions for so many centuries past.

M. Reinach, Membre de L'Institut, in his *Apollo* (1904), writes as follows:—“Si je ne dis rien ici de l'art de l'Inde ni de celui de la Chine, c'est que la haute antiquité qu'on leur attribue est une illusion. L'Inde n'a pas eu d'art avant l'époque d'Alexandre le Grand et, quant à l'art chinois, il n'a commencé à produire

ses chefs-d'oeuvre qu'au cours du moyen âge européen." But it might be argued that an art which began, according to M. Reinach, even so late as "during the Middle Ages," need not necessarily be excluded from a comprehensive work which opens with the quaternian period and brings the reader down step by step to Manet and Whistler. Especially so, when we find that naturalism, impressionism, and "pleinairisme," generally regarded as developments of the nineteenth century, were advocated by the Chinese at least a thousand years before their appearance in western *salons*.

Finally, M. André Michel, Professeur à l'Ecole du Louvre, in the prospectus to his forthcoming *History of Art*, states plainly that "l'Histoire de l'Art laisse également de côté les arts extra-européens, art musulman, art chinois, art japonais."

The above facts seem to me to point to the conclusion that Chinese pictorial art has always been slurred over in European text-books, for the simple reason that no translations of Chinese works on art have yet provided the necessary data for foreign writers. The present volume is intended to serve at any rate as a temporary stopgap, being for the most part composed of extracts from authoritative works, here translated for the first time, thus exhibiting something of the theory of Chinese pictorial art from the point of view of the Chinese themselves. It has proved a not unlaborious task to transfer the information contained in this book from the original Chinese texts; it is hoped however that, with the addition of an index in Chinese to the painters and to the works mentioned, some measure of usefulness has been attained.

The twelve full-page illustrations are intended to indicate, so far as possible, the principal lines of Chinese painting,—history, religion (Buddhism and Taoism), landscape, flowers, birds, beasts, and portraiture. They were chosen for me by Mr. Laurence Binyon, of the British Museum, and the illuminating notes which he has added to each seem to me entirely in keeping with his high reputation as an art critic. For permission to use four of these illustrations I am indebted to the courtesy of the editors of the *Kokka*; for a fifth I have to offer my best thanks to Mr. Arthur Morrison; the others come from the British Museum.

The four smaller pictures were kindly photographed for me from the original woodcuts by Mrs. Langley, of Hedgerley Lodge, Cambridge. They include an unpublished picture of Christ, which was probably inspired by Nestorian priests and has been handed down, recut at intervals, from the seventh century.

HERBERT A. GILES

Cambridge, 1st May 1905

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CHAPTER I

B. C. 2700 — A. D. 200

Early Ages — The Han Dynasty

Legend tells us that under the Yellow Emperor, who ruled over China more than 4500 years ago, and from whose reign date the principal arts and crafts of mankind, there were two inspired sages, namely Ts'ang Chieh, the inventor of writing, and Shih Huang, the inventor of drawing.

It is, however, usually admitted by Chinese scholars that the arts of writing and drawing came into existence together, from one and the same source, at the time when primeval man began, in China as elsewhere, to trace rude pictures of things, and then combinations of these to form pictures of ideas, as a means of communication with his gradually developing fellow-creatures.

Thus we read, "Drawing is one of the Six Scripts. The ancients, when they made bells and incense-burners of metal and stone, often covered them with inscriptions in the Seal character, which looked like drawings; while artists, on the other hand, when drawing water, or the epidendrum, or the bamboo, or the plum, or grapes, borrow a good deal from the calligraphic art, thus proving that writing and drawing are in reality one."

The earliest mention of colour dates from the reign of the Emperor Shun, nearly 500 years later. His Majesty—if we accept the *Shu Ching* or Book of History, and there is no reason why we should not—wished that the twelve symbols of power, which had been handed down from the earliest ages, should be embroidered (some say painted) in the five colours on his sacrificial robes, and, with certain restrictions, on the robes of his Ministers of State.

These twelve symbols—the actual symbolism of each is unknown—are frequently to be met with in ceramic art and elsewhere, and may be enumerated here:—

On the Upper Robe.

1. The sun, with a three-legged raven in it.
2. The moon, with a hare in it, pounding the drug of immortality.
3. Stars.
4. Mountains.
5. Two Dragons.
6. A Pheasant.

On the Lower Robe.

7. Two goblets, with an animal on each.
8. A spray of pondweed.
9. Flames of fire.
10. Rice meal.
11. An axe.
12. The figure 𠄎, said to be two 𠄎 *chi* (self) back to back.

According to some, the first painter was a younger sister of the Emperor Shun, named Lei, who was known in consequence as Picture Lei. "Alas," cried a disgusted critic of later ages, "that this divine art should have been invented by a woman!"

In the year B.C. 1326 we have the famous dream, also recorded in the *Shu Ching*, of King Wu Ting of the Yin dynasty, in which God gave him a vision of the man who was to prop a while his tottering House. On awaking, the King described the man's features, and caused a search to be made for him with the aid of a portrait drawn from remembered details. A builder named Yüeh, who answered to the description, was found, and was straightway appointed Prime Minister.

Han Fei Tzū, a philosopher who died in B.C. 233, tells the following story:—A retainer spent three years in painting a bean for the Prince of Chou; but when the latter saw nothing more than the picture of an ordinary red bean, he was very angry. "Build a ten-plank wall," said the painter; "cut in it an

eight-foot window, and then examine the bean there, in the rays of the rising sun." The Prince did so, and was astounded to find that the bean was covered with dragons, snakes, birds, beasts, chariots, horses, etc. etc.

Lu Pan, who was contemporary with Confucius, and is now the god of carpenters, is said to have enticed a water-demon to the surface of a stream, and to have traced its features on the ground with his heel before the creature became aware of what was going on, when it straightway disappeared. Similar stories, with varying details, are told of other personages.

A painter named Lieh Yü, who flourished under the "First Emperor," about B.C. 220, could fill his mouth with coloured water, and spit it on to the ground in the form of goblins. With his finger he could draw on the earth a perfectly straight line a thousand feet in length, and on a square inch he could depict the four rivers and the five mountains in a map of the feudal States of which China had up to that date consisted. He also painted dragons and phoenixes, always without pupils to their eyes. If these were put in, the creatures would fly away.

In the eulogy on T'ien Tan, who died a hero's death about B. C. 200, his panegyrist exclaims, "Good artists are many; why does not one of them draw him?"

The Prince of Huai-nan, who died B.C. 122, says that the painters of his day "painted every hair, but missed the expression."

Liu Hsiang, B.C. 80—9, mentions that the Prince of the Ch'i State offered a reward to any painter who would produce a picture of a nine-storeyed belvedere which he had just built, and especially alludes to a certain artist who, being absent for a long time from home, occupied over this work, painted his wife's portrait and used to talk and laugh with it.

The same writer, in another book, tells how a man named Yeh, who greatly admired the dragon, was always painting dragons on the doors, windows, etc., of his house. One day, a real dragon put its head in at the window, while its tail came in at the front door. Yeh bolted in fear, and thereafter dropped his hobby.

Maps date back to very early times. Mention of them will be found in the *Book of History*, in the *Elegies of Ch'u* (4th

century B.C.), and in the *Historical Record* (1st century B.C.). The last-mentioned contains the well-known story of Ching K'o, who went on a mission to the Prince of a rival State under the pretence of surrendering territory, but really to assassinate the Prince. For this purpose he carried with him a roll-map of his own State, in which lay concealed a sword. He only succeeded, however, in wounding the Prince, who thereupon fled down a narrow passage, where he would have been killed but for a eunuch, who called to him to turn and draw. He did so, and ultimately succeeded in slaying his pursuer. This scene has always been a favourite subject with Chinese artists, as will be seen later on.

With the opening of the Western Han dynasty in B.C. 206 we begin to feel ourselves on genuinely historic ground, even amidst the ever-present element of fable in which the Chinese take such keen delight.

In the official History of the period we have the well-known story of the escape of the founder (B.C. 202) from a city in which he was besieged by a surrounding army of Hsiung-nu, the ancestors of the Huns. A clever Minister, who was sharing the siege, forwarded to the wife of the Hun chieftain the portrait of a lovely girl, saying that the Emperor wished to offer the young lady as a present to her husband. The chieftain's wife said nothing about the picture, but represented to her husband that after all the Emperor ruled by the grace of God, and that they could not keep his territory if they got it. So her husband was persuaded to open a way through his lines, and to let the Emperor escape.

Towards the close of the 2nd century B.C. we find the Emperor ordering the portrait of the deceased mother of his most faithful Minister to be painted and hung up with other pictures in the palace of Kan-ch'üan, and we are told that the son never passed this picture without prostrating himself before it in tears. There also, we are told, was hung the portrait of Li Fu-jen, the famous favourite of the Emperor Wu Ti, B.C. 140—87, whose beauty was such that "one glance of hers would destroy a city, two glances a State." At her death the Emperor was incon-

solable, and gladly accepted the offer of a magician, named Shao Wêng, to put him into communication with her departed spirit. Lamps were lighted, wine and food set out, and a curtain drawn across the room. From behind the latter, his Majesty saw with his own eyes the veritable form of the dead girl pass into the room and walk about; but he was not allowed to approach her.

In B.C. 91 a picture of Chou Kung of old, carrying the infant Prince whose throne he secured, was presented by the same Emperor to his faithful Minister Ho Kuang, as a forecast of the part the latter might some day be expected to play.

In B.C. 51 the Emperor Yüan Ti for the first time in history received as his vassal the Shan-yü or Zenghi of the Hsiung-nu, and in gratitude to the warriors and statesmen who had brought about the submission of these dreaded foes, his Majesty caused the portraits of eleven of the most eminent,—among them Su Wu and Ho Kuang,—with their names and titles attached, to be hung in the Unicorn Pavilion. Under the next reign, when Western tribes from Tangut or Tibet were threatening the frontier, the Emperor Ch'êng Ti bade Yang Hsiung, the great philosopher and statesman of his day, pronounce a eulogium before the pictures of the dead heroes, probably in the hope that their spirits might still come to the rescue of the Empire they had once served so well.

We further read of a picture illustrating the drunken orgies of Chou Hsin, the last tyrant of the Yin dynasty (perished B.C. 1122), used as a warning to the Emperor Ch'êng Ti, who although in many respects a good ruler, was overfond of wine and women.

In what we may call the Art Section of the W. Han History, some fifteen or sixteen illustrated books are mentioned, such as *Portraits of Confucius and his Disciples*, *Sun Wu's Art of War*, *The Miao-tzü*, and so on; but as in the case of many of the pictures mentioned above, no artists' names are given. It must be borne in mind, of course, that at this date and for many centuries later, the books were in manuscript and the illustrations hand-painted.

In the Astronomical Section of the same work will also be found allusions to star-maps, and we are told that the constel-

lations as represented therein were pictures of States, of public buildings, and of miscellaneous objects.

Altogether, there are only six artists whose names have been recorded under the Western Han dynasty. They seem all of them to have gravitated towards Ch'ang-an in Shensi, the old capital; but of the second, third, and fourth in chronological order it is not necessary to say more than that they excelled in drawing oxen, horses, and birds, while the fifth and sixth attracted attention as colourists.

The first, Mao Yen-shou, a noted painter of portraits, "with likeness guaranteed," was put to death for the following act of treachery. The Emperor Yüan Ti, B.C. 48—32, had so many concubines that he did not know them by sight. He therefore commissioned Mao Yen-shou to paint all their portraits; and in order to secure pleasing likenesses, the ladies bribed the painter. Chao Chün, however, the beauty of the harem, refused to do so; of course with disastrous results to her own portrait. Later on, when it became necessary to present a bride to the Khan of the Hsiung-nu, Chao Chün was selected as the victim because of her ugliness. The Emperor saw her only when it was too late, and at once fell violently in love with her, actually sending a camel laden with gold to negotiate her repurchase. But the Khan refused to part with his treasure, and she became his queen. At her death, which occurred a few years afterwards, he also refused to allow her body to be taken back to China for burial. The mound over her grave remained always green, even when the country around was devoid of vegetation.

There are no traces remaining of any of the pictures which roused enthusiasm in these early days. But we may still be charmed by many of the beautiful shapes handed down to us as representing the goblets, vases, incense-burners, etc., etc., in jade or metal, which were in use even in the Confucian period.

The Eastern Han dynasty begins with the 25th year of the Christian era. The two Hans really form one long dynasty of 400 years, broken for a few years by the usurpation of Wang Mang; but the division into Western and Eastern, or Earlier and Later, is always followed by the Chinese, and they may be

roughly fixed in the memory as covering 200 years before the Christian era, and 200 years after it, respectively.

Under the heading "Chariots and Robes," in the Dynastic History, we read of elaborate paintings on the former, and equally magnificent embroideries on the latter; but no list of pictures is given, nor are there any critical notices upon the development of art.

One writer says, "When the old masters painted human figures, they used the four colours, yellow, white, blue, and purple, for the upper and lower robes, interchangeably. They did not use green, for that was near to the colour of the clothes worn by the common people. For a person playing the lute, either purple or yellow would be used; no other colour was possible."

Another authority states that Li Hsi, who was an official in Honan and elsewhere about the date of the Christian era, in the course of certain road-making enterprises came across various auspicious creatures and objects, and that he caused pictures of these to be first drawn and then facsimiles of them to be cut on stone. "Now the pictures which collectors have brought together of artists from the time of the Chin dynasty (A.D. 265—420) downwards, have always been on silk or paper, and the genuineness of these has often been open to doubt, depending as it does entirely on tradition; whereas it was always impossible to obtain pictures dating from the Han dynasty, until these were brought to light."

Altogether, we find the names of nine painters recorded as belonging to this period.

The first of these is Chang Hêng, who was famous in his youth for his knowledge of the *Five Classics*, and for his skill in the six fine arts, to wit, Ceremonies, music, archery, chariot-eering, calligraphy, and mathematics. He is said not to have cared to draw dogs and horses, but to have given all his time to demons and bogeys. "So difficult is it," says the biographer, "to reproduce realities as compared with imaginary beings." He too is credited with the feat of sketching a water-demon with his toe, as described above (p. 3).

The second painter is the great scholar and statesman Ts'ai Yung, A.D. 133—192. He is famous for having written out the

Five Classics in red ink on 46 tablets of stone for workmen to engrave. Fragments of these are said to be still in existence. He was once condemned to death for magical arts, and actually ended his days in prison. He was commissioned by the Emperor Ling Ti to paint a picture of the five contemporary generations of a certain noble family, to compose a panegyric upon the fact, and to write it out himself; which tasks he performed to such purpose that the results were known as the Three Beauties, — a beautiful painting, a beautiful composition, and beautiful writing. He also painted for the Hung-tu College the portraits of Confucius and his seventy-two disciples.

Two pictures of his are mentioned as "having vogue in his day." One was entitled "Teaching," and the other "Distinguished Ladies."

He was also an accomplished musician and a hard drinker, consuming so much liquor that he earned for himself the nickname of the Drunken Dragon. At his death, "of the gentry and literati of his native district, there was not one who did not shed tears, while portraits of him, with eulogistic inscriptions, were to be seen in every household."

The third painter is Chao Ch'i, an official who died in A.D. 201, at the great age of ninety and upwards. As a boy he was clever at his books, and had a distinctly artistic bias. He painted a famous picture of himself entertaining as guests four of the worthies of old, and this is really all we know of him as an artist.

The fourth painter was Liu Pao, who flourished in the 2nd century, and was Governor of a part of modern Ssüch'uan. He is said to have painted a picture of the Milky Way which made people feel hot, and another of the north wind which made people feel cold. His studies of ravens were also much admired.

Of the remaining five one is Chu-ko Liang, the great military hero, who is said to have painted pictures to amuse the "southern savages" whom he met on his way to Burma; and another is his son. Two have no record in particular, beyond the bald fact that they painted pictures; but of the last, Li I-ch'i, the following story is told. When Liu Pei, who in A.D. 221 founded Shu, one of the Three Kingdoms into which the Empire of the Hans was broken up, was considering whether or not he should attack

his powerful rival Sun Ch'üan, King of Wu, another of these Kingdoms, he consulted Li I-ch'ü. The latter seized paper and brush—no anachronism this time—and sketched soldiers, horses, and weapons of various kinds. Then he put in a mighty giant, who was digging a large hole and burying them all.

Wang Mang the Usurper, mentioned above, caused the portrait of a noble whom he feared and had bribed heavily, to be painted on the wall of every Government office, not only in the capital but throughout the Empire; and in a work published towards the close of the dynasty, we first read of the two guardians of the house, whose grim figures, or at any rate their names, Shên Shu and Yü Lü, are to this day pasted annually on all the front doors in China to keep away evil spirits.

Under this dynasty we meet with an ever-increasing record of high officials whose portraits were painted by Imperial command. Thus, when Li Yeh was summoned by the "White Emperor" of modern Ssüch'uan (Kung-sun Shu), and preferred the alternative of a cup of poison, the grateful Emperor Kuang Wu bestowed distinctions upon his native village, ordered a record of the event to be entered in the dynastic annals, and caused his portrait to be painted as a memorial for ever. The practice, however, had been carried to a sufficiently alarming extent under the Emperor Hsüan Ti of the Western Han dynasty. "Any man," says the philosopher Wang Ch'ung, A.D. 27—97, "whose portrait did not hang in the Imperial Gallery, was held by his sons and grandsons to be of small account." In another place the same writer says, "Men love looking at portraits, because the portraits are pictures of the dead, and to look upon a dead man's face is as it were to hear his words and see his actions. But the writings of the ancients, handed down on bamboo and silk, will bring about the same results; why confine ourselves to looking at pictures on a wall?"

When the Emperor Hsüan Ti was giving a banquet, one of the Ministers of State, Sung Hung—famous for his refusal to divorce the wife of his "porridge days" in order to marry a princess—noticed that there was a new screen, ornamented with portraits of distinguished ladies. "Alas!" exclaimed Sung Hung, with sly allusion to Confucian precept, "I have never yet

seen any one who loves virtue as he loves beauty." The Emperor had the screen removed.

In the History of the Eastern Han Dynasty, we are told that in A.D. 61 the Emperor Ming Ti sent a mission to India to obtain information about the religion of Buddha, which had then been imperfectly known to the Chinese for some three centuries. The story of Ming Ti's dream is of course pure invention. In A.D. 67 the mission returned with Kashiapmadunga, who died soon afterwards at the capital, and with a number of Buddhist pictures and images. It is doubtful however if Buddhist influence on art began to be felt until a very much later period.

The same Emperor caused the portraits of sixty officials of merit to be painted and hung in a gallery of the Palace. But even Chinese Emperors cannot always have their way. There is an absurd story, though none the less true, of a strange character named Chiang Hung, who was summoned to office under the Emperor Huan Ti, A.D. 147—168, and who refused to go. By and by, when the Emperor was in the neighbourhood, his Majesty sent an artist to paint Chiang's portrait. The latter, however, stayed in bed, and when the artist went into his room, pulled the bed-clothes over his head, protesting that his eyes could not stand the glare.

The successful General, Ma Yüan, B.C. 14—A.D. 49, whose portrait, for some reason which is difficult to trace, was excluded from the gallery of the Emperor Ming Ti, is credited with a saying in which Art is figuratively employed. In direct opposition to George Herbert's lines

who aimeth at the sky
Shoots higher much than he that means a tree.

Ma Yüan advised his nephews to attempt to draw (some say "carve") swans rather than tigers. "Though you may fail," he urged, "in drawing a swan, the result will at any rate be like a duck; whereas if you try to draw a tiger, you will only turn out a dog." That is, in the words of an American humorist, a man should avoid Axminster desires if he has only rag-carpet capacities.

This General's daughter, described by a poet of the 3rd century as "beautiful and virtuous," became the adored wife of the Emperor Ming Ti of Buddhist fame. One day, as they were walking round their picture-gallery together, the Emperor pointed to a portrait of the daughters of the wise and good Emperor Yao, who bestowed them both on his meritorious successor, the pious Shun, and exclaimed, "Ah, if I could only get a Consort like one of these!" The next portrait was that of the divine Yao himself. "Ah," murmured the Empress as they gazed upon it, "if the Ministers and officials of this Empire could only get a ruler like him!" The Emperor saw the point, and smiled.

We are still far from the date of painters whose works have survived to the present time. Happily, however, we are enabled to get a glimpse at some of the features of Chinese architectural decoration which we know to have been familiar so long ago as a couple of centuries before the Christian era. This chance came about as follows. In the year A.D. 147, some members of a wealthy family, named Wu, built a mausoleum and adorned it with historical and mythological scenes sculptured on stone. By the 12th century, nothing remained of the building save a few of the sculptured blocks half buried in the earth, which attracted the attention of two eminent antiquarians, who recorded notices of them in their respective works. Six more centuries passed, and then another antiquarian appeared, who in 1786 visited the actual site, and worked to such purpose that a further large number of blocks were recovered from the sand in which they had lain concealed, and were carefully arranged in a building where they are still to be seen.

Professor Chavannes, of the Collège de France, has published an exhaustive work on the subject, with illustrations, to which the reader is referred for fuller details. He rejects the suggestion of Babylonian or Egyptian influence in these terms:—

"On invoque la ressemblance qui, dit-on, doit frapper l'observateur entre les bas-reliefs de Chan-tong et certaines sculptures de l'Égypte ou de la Babylonie. M. Paléologue (*L'Art chinois*, p. 138) a déjà fait justice de cet argument: 'Les caractères communs, dit il, que présentent certaines figurations plastiques de ces deux civilisations, qui furent si éloignées dans le temps comme dans

l'espace, proviennent de cette loi qui impose à tous les arts naissants les mêmes procédés et les mêmes conventions, parce que, dans son inexpérience, l'esprit humain, à son éveil, est soumis aux mêmes conditions, a partout les mêmes ressources et les mêmes exigences expressives.' Cela est tellement vrai que si les uns croient voir dans les bas-reliefs de Chan-tong des réminiscences de l'art chaldéen, M. Douglas y a manifestement aperçu une inspiration égyptienne; il l'a même si bien discernée qu'il a pris un arbre pour un obélisque. En fait, on découvrira des rapports entre les premiers essais artistiques de tous les peuples parce que partout les mêmes causes produisent les mêmes effets; mais il faut se rappeler que, par un corollaire de ce même principe, ressemblance n'implique pas filiation."

Professor Chavannes goes on to say that the historical subjects depicted are all drawn with extreme fidelity from the early annals of China, while those scenes which cannot be traced to Chinese mythological sources are also not to be found in any Western mythology.

As might be expected, Professor Chavannes ranks these Chinese sculptures below similar specimens of Egyptian art.

"La faute en est sans doute en partie à la matière première: la pierre du Chan-tong est d'un grain trop grossier pour que la pureté des lignes qu'on y trace s'y conserve. Mais, plus encore que la pierre, il faut mettre en cause l'artiste: les attitudes sont comme imposées par une tradition, de telle sorte que deux bas-reliefs, s'ils représentent la même scène, seront presque identiques; les sentiments sont exprimés d'une manière enfantine: ainsi la terreur sera uniformément marquée par le hérissément des cheveux; et si les postures manquent de variété, que dire des visages qui semblent les répétitions d'un type unique? il serait impossible de connaître qui ils représentent si un petit écriteau placé à côté du personnage ne venait souvent nous renseigner."

CHAPTER II

A. D. 200—600

The Three Kingdoms — The Six Dynasties

The Wei dynasty—one of the Three Kingdoms—lasted only forty-five years, A.D. 220—265. It was virtually founded by Ts'ao Ts'ao, the subtle statesman and grim general who once sentenced himself to death for a breach of the law, but was persuaded to satisfy his sense of justice by cutting off his hair. He never mounted the throne, dying of some brain disease rather than allow Hua T'o, the great surgeon of the day, to administer an anaesthetic and cut open his skull.

Four names of painters are recorded during this brief period. The first of these, great-grandson of Ts'ao Ts'ao, sat on the throne as fourth Emperor of the Wei dynasty from A.D. 254 to 260. Several of his works were recognised by posterity as master-pieces; *e. g.*, his picture of Robber Chih, the notorious highwayman mentioned by Chuang Tzŭ; and his picture of Ch'ien Lou and his wife, this being probably the well-known deathbed scene, when Ch'ien Lou's shroud was found to be too short. If his head was covered, his feet stuck out; if the feet were covered, his head remained bare. Some one suggested that the shroud should be placed cornerwise. "No!" cried his wife; "better the straight, even if insufficient, than the crooked, though enough and to spare!"

Of the second artist, Yang Hsiu, not much is known, except that he was an official and painted pictures of Ch'ang-an, the capital under the Western Hans, of Chi Cha, and of other heroes of old. Also—and here begins one of the evergreen stories—while painting a fan for Ts'ao Ts'ao, he accidentally dropped

some ink upon it, but saved the situation by skilfully turning the blot into a fly.

The third artist, named Huan Fan, was Minister of Agriculture in A.D. 245. All we are told of him is that "he was good at red and blue," a term for painting still in use.

The fourth was a Minister of Justice, named Hsü Mo, contemporary with Huan Fan. On one occasion, the Emperor was on the banks of the Lo River, and saw a white otter which he was anxious to secure. Hsü Mo said, "Otters are very fond of perch, and will risk their lives to get a bite." Thereupon he took a piece of wood, and painted it to resemble a perch, and hung it over the bank. There was immediately a rush of otters to the spot, and the white one was easily caught. The Emperor was delighted, and asked him how he made the perch so life-like. "Your servant has never painted before," he replied; "but what others can do, your servant can also do, more or less."

Another of the Three Kingdoms, founded by Sun Ch'üan under the name of Wu, gives us the name of a single artist, Ts'ao Pu-hsing (*or* Fu-hsing), known to the Japanese as Sō-futsu-kō, and wrongly described by Anderson as "the first painter whose memory has been rescued from oblivion" (*The Pictorial Arts of Japan*, p. 253). The "fly" story is repeated of him, with the addition that the Emperor mistook the painted for a live fly, and tried to brush it away.

In A.D. 238 the Emperor saw a dragon coming down from heaven, and bade Ts'ao make a picture of it. Two hundred years later there was a severe drought; and when prayers for rain had been offered up without result, Ts'ao's picture was brought out, and thrown into the water. Immediately a dense mist arose, followed by pelting rain, which lasted for ten days. One critic of the day went so far as to say that when he looked on the head of a dragon by Ts'ao, which hung in the Imperial Gallery, he felt as though he was looking on a real dragon.

His greatest feat perhaps was to paint an image—here we are evidently on the track of Buddhism—on a scroll of silk fifty feet in height. "Such was his marvellous co-ordination of hand and eye," says the Chinese text, "that in a very short time the picture was completed, with head, face, hands, feet,

chest, breast, shoulders, and back, all in perfect proportion. Difficult as such a feat was, Ts'ao Pu-hsing could accomplish it."

His chief works, however, five of which are mentioned in the *Hua shih* of the T'ang dynasty, seem to have been confined to dragons, tigers, wild animals, and savages. Hsieh Ho, the artist and critic of the 5th and 6th centuries (see *post*), wrote of him, "This artist's works have not come down to us. There is, however, in the Imperial Library one single picture of a dragon. Gazing upon this creature, informed with spirituality and vigour, it is impossible to say that the artist's fame was ill-deserved."

T'ang Hou, the art-critic who flourished under the Yüan dynasty (see *post*), says of him, "Ts'ao Pu-hsing was considered a great artist in ancient days. He painted the creases on the clothes of his figures so faithfully that there arose the saying: Ts'ao's clothes look as if just come from the wash; Wu Tao-tzu's girdles as if fluttered by the wind. Only one picture of his, a military subject, was found in the Imperial collection at the beginning of the twelfth century. I once saw this at a friend's house. It bore the seal of the Emperor Kao Tsung, 1127—1162, and the execution and colouring were excellent. I should say it was the work (*i.e.* copy) of some artist of the late T'ang or early Sung dynasties (10th cent.)."

With the opening of the Chin dynasty, A.D. 265—420, the artistic horizon begins to widen, and it would be scarcely possible, even if necessary, to deal satisfactorily with all the twenty-one or twenty-two painters whose names have been handed down.

Mention must be made of Wei Hsieh, first in chronological order, chiefly because he is declared by Hsieh Ho to have been "the first artist to paint detail, ancient pictures having up to his date been sketchy. He was good in all the Six Canons (see *post*), and although not quite a master of form, was by no means lacking in strength. He strode over the heads of his contemporaries, a great model for distant ages."

He excelled in Taoist and Buddhist subjects, and painted "The Seven Buddhas," "Portraits of Distinguished Women," "The Tipsy Guest," "Gods and Immortals," besides mythological and historical pictures. He studied under Ts'ao Pu-hsing. His

work is generally considered to have been "powerful and full of feeling, subtle and expressive of thought." Legend tells us that he dared not put pupils to the eyes of his gods, for fear that they should start into life. He had great vogue in his day, and together with Chang Mo, who painted a portrait of Vimalakirti, shared the title of Inspired Painter. The *Hsüan ho hua p'u* classes him as a painter of human figures, and mentions two of his pictures in the Imperial collection (12th cent.).

T'ang Hou of the Yüan dynasty says in his *Hua chien*, "In the *Ming hua chi* of the T'ang dynasty, Wei Hsieh is classed above Ku K'ai-chih. His pictures are not often to be seen, but I myself have seen the two mentioned in the *Hsüan ho hua p'u*, "A Hero" and "Tiger-sticking." They are the work of some hand of the late T'ang or of the Five Dynasties (10th cent). Genuine pictures by Wei Hsieh are not to be seen."

The second on the list is Hsün Hsü, a pupil of Wei Hsieh's, of whom the following story is told in connection with Chung Hui, a clever but unscrupulous soldier of the day. Hsün Hsü had a valuable sword, which his mother kept for him. By forging Hsün Hsü's handwriting, Chung Hui got the mother to deliver up the sword. Hsün Hsü, guessing who had played him this trick, avenged himself in the following manner. Being an artist, he went to a house which Chung Hui and his brother were building, and painted on one of the inner walls a huge picture of their dead father in full Court costume. The brothers on entering their new house were so shocked by this sight that they declined to live there, and allowed the place to go to ruin.

Chang Shou, fifth on the list, is noted for a series of frescos painted (some say on the beams) in the ceremonial hall dedicated to Chou Kung at Ch'êng-tu, the capital of Ssüch'uan. These were portraits of Confucius and his seventy-two disciples, of the Three Emperors and Five Rulers of mythological days, and of all the saints and sages down to the Han dynasty. We are told that "the glory of these filled the hall, and that the ceremonies and music of ten thousand generations were thus placed at the disposition of students."

Wang I is known as having been tutor in drawing to the Emperor Ming Ti, who died in 325, and also as designer of the

Scene from 'The Admonitions of the Female Historian,'
by KU K'AI-CHIH.

In the British Museum.

One of eight scenes painted on a long roll. Though of so early a period, there is nothing primitive about the workmanship; on the contrary, the painter has perfect mastery over his materials, and his delight in it overflows in the exquisite modulations of the brush with which the floating draperies are expressed. For beauty of sweeping yet sensitive line, few paintings in the world approach this. Yet charming touches of actual life prevent the art from being over-calligraphic. Note the rebellious gesture of the boy undergoing his toilet: note also the sense of dignity, of refinement—still more apparent in other scenes of the roll—pointing to an age of culture. Chinese art must have been flourishing for many centuries before work so mature as this could be produced. As writers on the subject have assumed that no work of this period remains, and have conjectured that only rude beginnings existed before the introduction of Buddhism and Indian art, this painting of Ku K'ai-chih is of extreme importance to students as well as of high aesthetic value. Even if it be disputed that we have here the actual handiwork of the artist, it must be a very early copy, giving his style in all essentials. No one can now prove the point; but the evidence of documents and seals, no less than the mastery of workmanship, are all in favour of its authenticity.

The roll, with its dark ground, presents enormous difficulties to photography; hence the painting can only be imagined from the reproduction.

L. B.



Ku Kai-chih.

eastern and western pagodas at Wu-ch'ang. His recorded pictures include "Strange Animals," "A Lion and Elephant Fight," "Fishes and Dragons at Play," "A Rhinoceros," and others.

Eighth on the list stands Wang Hsi-chih, A.D. 321—379, known to the Japanese as Ogishi, who in spite of a military career is ranked as China's greatest calligraphist. His writing was "light as floating clouds, vigorous as a startled dragon," and he is said to have been the first to form complete characters by a single stroke of his brush (see *Lu T'an-wei*). His painting was also of a high class, calling forth the praise of his uncle Wang I (above), who declared that his nephew at sixteen years of age could reproduce anything that he saw. He seems to have been a Meissonnier in the sense that he painted small pictures with infinite elaboration. It is also recorded of him, as an unusual feat, that he painted his own portrait from a looking-glass.

His son, Wang Hsien-chih, A.D. 344—388, followed in his father's footsteps, and succeeded in both calligraphy and painting. Among his pictures was one entitled "The Wind-Spirit," especially interesting from the fact, as stated, that it was painted on "white hemp paper." This is probably the earliest mention of paper, of which some sort is thought to have been invented in the 1st century A.D. The old "blot" story is told of him, with the variation that he turned it into a black colt and a cow.

Hsieh An, A.D. 320—385, the general who, when news of victory was brought to him, quietly finished his game of *wei-ch'i*, unmoved, was also a painter. "Although he did not make a business of art, he surpassed the professional artists of his day."

Of one Wang Mêng, who employed his skill in decorating chariots, we read that he said, "I love eating, and drinking, and painting; and if people offer me good food, good wine, and fine silk, why should I refuse?"

We now come to a painter who, to judge from all that has been written about him, truth and fiction alike, must have been a truly great artist.

Ku K'ai-chih (Jap. Ko-gai-shi) lived in the 4th and 5th centuries A.D. We first hear of him in the year 364, when he put his name down for one million *cash* as his subscription to a

Buddhist monastery. This was thought to be "large talk," and soon afterwards the priests begged him to pay up. In reply he said he must first prepare a wall; and after shutting himself up for over a month, he succeeded in painting a full-length portrait of the lay Buddhist worthy Vimalakirti. Then, when the doors were opened, a mighty glory filled the entire monastery, and crowds of delighted visitors soon made up the million *cash* he had promised.

After painting a portrait, which seems to have been his speciality in art, he would never put pupils to the eyes even for several years, declaring that expression was entirely dependent upon what the artist received.

"He excelled," we are told, "in painting fans. Once he painted portraits of Yüan Chi and Hsi K'ang (two notabilities of the 3rd century), but put no pupils to the eyes, and sent the fans back. If he had put pupils, said the Emperor, the portraits would have been able to speak."

The Chinese fan was originally made of feathers; the article here intended is a light frame of bamboo or ivory, round or otherwise, over which silk has been stretched. It seems to have been widely adopted at this date for the purpose of carrying pictures and inscriptions. The folding fan was invented by the Japanese, and is not mentioned until the 11th century, when it is said to have reached China through Korea. Early in the 15th century, folding fans formed part of the tribute sent from Korea to Peking. One writer mentions as a curiosity four folding fans which were given to him by Matteo Ricci, the famous Jesuit Father, who died in 1610.

On one occasion, being much struck by the beauty of a girl who lived next door, Ku K'ai-chih painted her portrait, and fixed it on the wall by means of thorns, one of which pierced the girl's heart. She immediately fell ill of a pain in the heart, and was only cured by removal of the thorn.

One of his favourite sayings was, "'Tis easier to sweep the five-stringed lute than to note the flight of the wild swan," thus definitely ranking painting before music as a fine art. He also declared that "in painting, the most troublesome subject is man, then landscape, then dogs and horses, then buildings, which

being fixed objects are easy to manage up to a certain point, but of which it is difficult to get finished pictures."

He further says that "painting the face of a pretty young girl is like carving a portrait in silver. There may be great elaboration, but no likeness will be forthcoming." It is better, he adds, "to put the elaboration into the young lady's clothes, and trust to a touch here and a stroke there to bring out her beauty as it really is." In like manner he points out the difficulty of imparting an air of nobility or humility to the mighty or lowly ones of the earth.

When he painted the portrait of Hsieh K'un, he provided a background of "lofty peaks and deep ravines," thus showing a conception of man's place in nature, to which there is hardly a parallel in European art.

Of his pictures other than portraits a fairly long list is given, from which may be mentioned "Eleven Lions," "Tiger and Leopard, with Vultures," "Playing with Dice," "A Buddhist Assembly," "Division of Buddhist Relics," "Goddesses," and several landscapes, to show the variety of his styles. It was said that his portraits were remarkable for their depth and spirituality; and that whereas other artists of his day excelled him in flesh and in bone, *i. e.*, in anatomical correctness, he surpassed them all in expression. "And as expression," says the critic, "is of an occult nature, beyond anything which can be learnt of all painters, I place Ku first."

This view of his merits was not shared by Hsieh Ho, who places him third in his third class, and dismisses him with the following curt note. "He excelled in fineness of detail, and never made a false stroke; but his execution fell short of his conception, and his reputation is beyond his merits."

The *Hsüan ho hua p'u* gives the titles of nine of his pictures in the Imperial collection (12th cent.). These are "A Hermit of Pure Fame," "Three Heavenly Beauties," "The Great Yü Draining the Empire," "Huang Ch'u-p'ing Tending his Sheep," "An Ancient Worthy," "The Spring Dragon rising from its Winter Sleep," "Admonitions of the Female Historian," "Making a Lute," and "Tending Sheep." One of these—"Admonitions of the Female Historian"—is now in the British Museum. It is mentioned with others by Mi Fei, painter and art-critic (1051—1107) in his *Hua shih*. "The picture entitled 'Admonitions of the Female

Historian' is a horizontal scroll, and is now in the possession of Liu Yu-fang. The colouring is very vivid, and the beards and hair are luxuriant and glossy. In the Veritable Record of the Emperor T'ai Tsung (976—997) there is this entry: 'Bought a picture from the brush of Ku K'ai-chih.' Nowadays people collect copies of Ku's pictures of 'Eminent Women' made under the T'ang dynasty for the purpose of being engraved and reproduced on fans. The figures are something over three inches in length, being of the same size as those in 'Admonitions of the Female Historian' now in the possession of the Liu family." Mi Fei then goes on to mention a number of pictures in his own collection, attributed to Ku K'ai-chih but in reality forgeries.

T'ang Hou of the Yüan dynasty says in his *Hua chien*, "Ku K'ai-chih painted his pictures as a spring silkworm spins silk. At first sight the pictures seem flat and occasionally wanting in resemblance, but a closer inspection shows that the Six Canons are all observed. His ideas are like clouds floating in space, or a stream hurrying along,—perfectly natural." The writer adds that Wu Tao-tzü imitated his style so exactly that in the 12th century many of the latter's pictures were wrongly attributed to Ku K'ai-chih.

Attached to the picture in the British Museum, which is a roll of brown silk, $9\frac{3}{4}$ in. wide, 11 ft. $4\frac{1}{2}$ in. long, are several inscriptions and a number of impressions of seals representing different owners. One of the former runs, "At an odd moment in summer I came across Ku K'ai-chih's picture 'Admonitions of the Female Historian,' and under its influence I sketched in ink a spray of epidendrum, as an expression of sympathy with its profound and mysterious purport.

Written by the Emperor in the Lai-ch'ing Pavilion."

Then follow eighteen lines of poetry, praising the excellence of the Female Historian's precepts, and after these an inscription by the Emperor Ch'ien Lung, dated 1746, five days before the summer solstice, from which it is clear that this great monarch, who would have the best critical advice at his beck and call, believed that he was gazing at a genuine picture by Ku K'ai-chih. His Majesty declares that "only one who had himself reached Samâdhi—the highest pitch of abstract ecstatic medi-

tation—could attain to such a standard as this.” “The picture,” he continues, “has not lost its freshness, an achievement not to be compassed by the after-born. Of the painter’s four works, this is the best. It has always been preserved in the quiet retirement of the Palace,” etc. etc. Of the seals, one is that of the statesman Sung Ch’i, 998—1061; another was recognised by Dr. Bushell as that of the Emperor Hui Tsung, 1100—1126. At the end of all is a clever landscape by Tsou Yi-kuei, artist and author, who flourished 1680—1766. (For article by Mr. Binyon on this picture, see *The Burlington Magazine*, Jan., 1904.)

In conclusion, Ku K’ai-chih seems to have been generally regarded as a kind of Oliver Goldsmith of art. He was popularly known as “the biggest man of his day in three different lines, —the biggest wit, the biggest painter, and the biggest fool.”

The next artist worthy of record is Tai K’uei (also in Hsieh Ho’s third class); not so much because he was a precocious artist and became a skilled painter of animals, of portraits, and of religious pictures, but because he is mentioned as having been good at casting Buddhistic images which he afterwards ornamented with carving. Over such a statue of Amida Buddha, sixteen feet in height, he spent three years. This is a point of some interest, as the name Amida was not known to the Chinese until A.D. 300, and Tai K’uei must have flourished less than a century later, for we read of his eldest son being already distinguished as a painter in 405. Among his pictures were “An Old Fisherman,” “Famous Horses,” “A Black Lion,” and “Tartar Tribute of Animals,” besides portraits and landscapes. Mi Fei has an important passage in reference to this artist. “The ‘Avālokiteśvara’ (Kuan Yin) of Tai K’uei is in my collection. The features are those of a divine man, without beard, the background being all of gold.” Since the early part of the 12th century Kuan Yin has been represented as a woman, the Goddess of Mercy, often with a child.

Sometimes the physician of old called in the artist to his aid. Under this dynasty we have a case of a woman cured of a dangerous illness by the exhibition, not of drugs in the usual way, but of the picture of a wild boar fastened to the screen in her bedroom.

Eulogies or panegyrics on pictures may be said to date from

the Chin dynasty. Although usually of a rhapsodical, not to say hysterical, order, they often provide items of information not to be found elsewhere.

Fu Han, an official who died in 294, is responsible for about half a dozen of these, apparently due to inspiration on seeing the portraits of ancient heroes. Thus, for the portrait of the valiant Prince of Hsin-ling, who died B.C. 244, Fu Han wrote four lines of four words each:—

'Tis Hsin-ling, the hero of Wei,
Of tiger glance, of dragon spring,
Subtle in plan, fearful in onrush,
Shaking like thunder the northern frontier.

He seems to have seen portraits of Pien Ho and Liu-hsia Hui, painted side by side by Tsan Wên-chung of the 7th century B.C. The first had his feet cut off for presenting to his sovereign a piece of jade in its "skin," which was thought not to be genuine but was afterwards found to be so; and we are told that the painter did full justice to the horrid details, as well as putting in the tears of blood shed by the victim. Underneath the picture Fu Han wrote:

How short are the years of life,
And how quickly the light fades!
Yet thou shalt be known for all time,
Thy name bruited far and wide,
Engraved upon bells and tripods,
And thy portrait painted with the red and blue.

Liu-hsia Hui was a virtuous man who once held a lady on his knee for a considerable time without the slightest stain on his reputation. The painter took care to give him highly-coloured cheeks, as though he was blushing at the very thought of what he had done.

The wife of the Prince of Wu, 3rd century A.D., is said by a writer of the 4th century to have been able to weave coloured threads into cloth, so as to produce phoenixes and dragons. In the same way she also wove a map of the States, into which China had been divided, for the use of the Prince on his campaigns.

The short-lived Sung dynasty, A.D. 420—479, known as the Liu Sung, from the family name Liu, to distinguish it from the greater Sung dynasty to follow, has on its roll the names of

some thirty-five artists; and of these Lu T'an-wei, who comes first, stands in the very front rank of Chinese painters. He painted portraits of two of the Liu-Sung Emperors, of innumerable Princes, and also of many distinguished officials of the day, besides those of private individuals. Other pictures of his were "Cicada and Sparrow," "Korean Skewbalds," "Five White Horses," "Monkeys," "Fighting Ducks," landscapes and Buddhist scenes. His technical skill was of a high order. "The strokes of his brush were vigorous and sharp, as if cut by an awl, producing a sentient, moving picture before which the beholder stood aghast, as though in the presence of a miracle."

The above must refer to human figures, for it is said elsewhere that whereas "his human figures were truly marvellous, his landscapes, plants, and trees were nothing more than roughly executed." He is also mentioned as the first artist who produced a picture by a single stroke of his brush (see *Wang Hsi-chih*).

Hsieh Ho says, "In painting there are Six Canons (see p. 28), and it has ever been rare for any one to qualify in all. Lu T'an-wei managed to excel in every one. All principles and moods were familiar to him. Marvellous alike in conception and execution, he stands alone among ancient and modern artists, a model for ten thousand generations."

He is classed in the *Hsüan ho hua p'u* as a painter of religious subjects, and the titles of ten of his pictures are given as being in the Imperial collection (12th century). These are "Amitābha," "Buddha," "Manjusri," "A Hermit of Pure Fame" (Vimalakirti), "Devaraja with Pagoda on his Hand," "Devaraja of the North Gate," "Devaraja," "Portrait of Wang Hsien-chih," "Five Horses," and "Maritchi," a goddess with eight arms, otherwise known as the Queen of Heaven.

T'ang Hou of the Yüan dynasty says in his *Hua chien*, "Lu T'an-wei ranks with Ku K'ai-chih. I have only seen one genuine painting by the former, namely, his "Manjusri" (the God of wisdom, riding a lion which symbolises boldness). There are altogether eighty figures of attendants in this picture, as well as four angels flying, each with some exquisitely-portrayed characteristic. There is also a foreign priest holding in his hand a skull with water in it, as is the custom in Central Asia. The

work in this picture is exceedingly fine, without a trace of the brush-hairs to be seen. Its vitality and colouring are very stirring; truly 'tis a precious relic of antiquity."

Lu T'an-wei's son inherited his father's talent, producing wonderful pictures of Buddhas by "a dot here and a dash there," but they are few in number and rarely to be seen. "His picture of Shâkyamuni Buddha on hemp paper was the treasure of his day, for hemp paper makes the ink run, and it is impossible to pass the brush back,—a great obstacle to artists in colours."

Wang Wei was known as a clever youth, with literary, musical, and artistic talents, not to mention excursions into medicine and the black art. He wrote some notes on painting, of which extracts have been preserved. He descants upon the marvellous results which can be obtained from a bamboo tube with a few hairs in it—

when some painter dips
His pencil in the hues of earthquake and eclipse—

how it can equally depict the universe and the light of the human eye, raise up mountains or lay out plains, and from the elementary shapes produced by the square and compasses, develop such complex objects as houses, ships, birds, and beasts. This, he says, is what painting can achieve:—

"To gaze upon the clouds of autumn, a soaring exaltation in the soul; to feel the spring breeze stirring wild exultant thoughts;—what is there in the possession of gold and jewels to compare with delights like these? And then, to unroll the portfolio and spread the silk, and to transfer to it the glories of flood and fell, the green forest, the blowing winds, the white water of the rushing cascade, as with a turn of the hand a divine influence descends upon the scene. These are the joys of painting." This painter must not be confused with the greater Wang Wei of the T'ang Dynasty. The names are differently written in Chinese, though the English transliteration must be the same.

Tsung Ping was a painter who used to wander away on the mountains and forget to return, and he loved to be alone there and wake the echoes with his lute. Fearing that old age and sickness would interfere with his rambles, he covered the walls

of his house with landscapes of the places he had visited, boasting that on a surface three inches high he could place a precipice of 1,000 cubits, while with a foot or two of breadth he could produce thirty miles of scenery.

His *chef d'oeuvre*, however, was a picture of all the auspicious animals, birds, plants, and other objects which had appeared from China's legendary ages down to his own times. These numbered no fewer than 210, and formed a composition the beauty of which dazzled all beholders. In spite of this, Hsieh Ho places him only in the sixth class, chiefly on the ground of unevenness in his work.

Ku Chün-chih was an erratic genius who flourished under this dynasty. What we know of him is mostly recorded by Hsieh Ho, who places him at the head of the second class in his list of ancient and modern painters. "In rhythm and in strength, he scarcely rivals the great artists of old, but in delicacy and reverence of detail he surpasses them all. In his treatment of antiquity as though it were the present day, as a colourist, and as a delineator of form, he was consistently original, in the same sense that Fu Hsi was when he altered the Diagrams, and Shih Chou when he modified the existing script. He arranged for himself a kind of loft, which he used as a studio. On stormy or hot days he would not take up his brush, but on warm and bright days he was always ready to charge it with colour. Then he would mount into his loft, drawing the ladder up after him, and his wife and children would see but little of him. He was the first to paint the "Cicada and Sparrow," and during the Ta Ming period, A.D. 457—465, no one in the Empire dared to dispute his pre-eminence."

Here follow a number of minor painters, whose works of all kinds are usually enumerated in their biographies. One of these artists is credited with the picture of "A Clothes-horse," which some Chinese Bentley discovered to be a mistake for two characters meaning "brilliant robes," and forming part of a proper name. The same artist cured a friend of some disease by painting a lion on his bedroom door. Prayers were offered before it, and next morning the lion's jaws were found to be covered with blood, evidently of some demon which it had killed.

Paper is now constantly mentioned, which of course only proves that silk was still the common material in use.

Another artist was skilled in casting bronze Buddhas; and when one of the Princes cast a 16-foot Buddha whose face seemed much too small for its body, he showed that it was the shoulders which were too fat, and corrected the defect by filing them to the proper size.

The Southern Ch'i dynasty, A.D. 479—502, had more painters than years of existence, no fewer than twenty-eight names of artists being recorded. Among these, however, there do not appear to have been any great representatives of art.

Yin Ch'ien is said to have been "very skilful at portraits, the likeness in each case being perfect." When one of the Princes was put to death, his wife grieved for him so deeply that she became seriously ill. Her brother then secretly engaged Yin Ch'ien to paint a portrait of the late Prince with a former favourite concubine looking into a mirror together. This was brought to the notice of the sick lady, who directly she saw it spat in disgust upon the picture, and from that moment regained her health.

Mao Hui-yüan had studied under Ku K'ai-chih, and was a skilled painter of horses. He is noticed here merely because it is recorded of him that he used paper made from rattans.

His brother, Mao Hui-hsiu, was commissioned about A.D. 490 by the Emperor Wu Ti, who was projecting a campaign in the north, to paint a picture of the victorious northern campaign of his predecessor Wu Ti of the Han dynasty, some six centuries earlier, in order to fire the spirits of the generals who were to carry on the war.

Hsieh Ho (Jap. Shakaku), who flourished in the 5th and 6th centuries, is quoted as a clever portrait-painter. He required no sittings, but after a glance at his subject could go home and "reproduce from memory form, expression, and hair on face and head, without fault of any kind." He is also said to have introduced a greater minuteness of detail than had hitherto been attained. Further, he may be regarded as the first systematic writer on art. He produced a descriptive classification of the chief painters

who had preceded him, twenty-six in all, arranging them under six classes according to merit. In this list he appears to have rightly included only those artists whose works he himself had actually seen, some of whom have been mentioned, and others left unmentioned, in the preceding chapter.

In his first class, consisting of five names, he placed Lu T'an-wei, Ts'ao Pu-hsing, and Wei Hsieh, with remarks which have already been quoted. The remaining two painters appear to have been included because they were, like himself, painters of detail. Altogether, Hsieh Ho's criticisms, though curious and valuable, must be received with a certain amount of caution. To place Ku K'ai-chih in the third class, and Tsung Ping in the sixth class, is so contrary to tradition that some allowance must be made for the idiosyncracies of the critic.

One short sentence in his prefatory remarks is perhaps worth quoting:—"In art, the terms ancient and modern have no place."

His work was supplemented by Yao Tsui of the Ch'ên dynasty, 557—589, who gathered up some twenty more artists, among whom were Chang Sêng-yu, several Buddhist priests, and Hsieh Ho himself. A further supplement was compiled by Li Ssü-chên of the T'ang dynasty who added one hundred and twenty more names.

A later writer says, "The practice of copying the works of earlier artists began with Hsieh Ho; and this method subsequently became, from its easiness of execution, a kind of royal road, though it was found to be difficult to transfer the inspiration. True copying consists in studying the thought, not the lines, of a picture. Thus Chü Jan, Mi Fei, Huang Kung-wang, and Ni Yü, all studied Tung Yüan, but each after his own particular fashion; whereas a common mind would have copied the model slavishly, line for line, without of course achieving success."

Huang Po-ssü, the art-critic, has the following note on a work by this artist. "The picture of the Emperor Ming Ti of the Chin dynasty (A.D. 323—326) riding in his wheeled chair, was painted by Hsieh Ho of the Southern Ch'i dynasty. Although this is only a copy which has been handed down, the conception and likeness are those of ancient times; but to place a small table in the chair, and to display two carrying-poles alongside, is not at all in accordance with tradition. Further, at the time

of the Eastern Chin dynasty, hats and boots had not come into general fashion, yet in this picture we see the eunuchs wearing them." At the top of the scroll there is this inscription, "Copied by a mad (= enthusiastic) scholar in the summer of the year *Kuei ch'ou* of the period Kuang Shun (= A.D. 953)."

The Chinese have two methods of copying pictures, known as *lin* and *mu*, described as follows by a writer of the Sung dynasty, 960—1260. "*Lin* consists in laying the original picture upon a table, and reproducing it as nearly as possible on a piece of white silk arranged at the side. An unskilled artist cannot do this. *Mu* consists in taking a piece of silk and laying it down on the original picture, and then tracing over the latter. If the ink used is too thick, it will soak through to the picture below and do considerable damage. Any one who lends a valuable picture to be copied thus, is simply throwing it away; while any one who begs the loan of such a picture, and meets with a refusal, shows that he is still less of a connoisseur."

No mention of Hsieh Ho would be complete without some allusion to his division of the pictorial art under six headings or canons. There must be (1) rhythmic vitality, (2) anatomical structure, (3) conformity with nature, (4) suitability of colouring, (5) artistic composition, and (6) finish. These six canons have already been alluded to, and will frequently be mentioned in the course of this work.

The Liang dynasty lasted from A.D. 479 to 557, and produced about sixteen painters whose names have been handed down.

The list opens with three Imperial princes, and we are told that one of these used to dash off likenesses of his guests in the banquet-hall, which were easily recognised by children on whom their resemblance was tested.

But before proceeding, it is worth while to mention that, according to Lo Pin-wang, a poet of the 7th century, wall-paintings were first introduced under this dynasty. This new departure, as will be seen, was obviously in response to a desire on the part of Buddhists for ornamentation in their temples, from which the custom very naturally spread to the Imperial Palace and the mansions of wealthy individuals.

Fourth on the list stands one of China's really great painters, Chang Sêng-yu, known to the Japanese as Chō-sō-yu, whom Anderson alludes to as the next artist after Ts'ao Pu-hsing, "concerning whom any precise information is attainable." As a matter of fact, the information concerning Chang Sêng-yu is not so precise as that which is obtainable concerning many painters of much earlier times. We do not know the dates either of his birth or death. We hear of him first of all about A.D. 510, employed as keeper of the pictures under one of the Imperial princes. The reigning Emperor, a devout Buddhist, who on two occasions actually adopted priestly garb, and had all his sacrificial victims made of dough in order to avoid taking life, engaged Chang to paint pictures for a temple he had just built. He also commissioned him to paint the portraits of the Princes, who were all away from home, the result being a set of likenesses "exactly like the originals."

There are several dragon stories associated with Chang's name. He is said to have spoken lightly of the famous dragon by Tsao Pu-hsing, and to have painted a very wonderful one of his own in another temple. Thunder and lightning however attacked the building, and the wall on which he had painted his dragon, entirely disappeared. Then he painted four dragons at a temple in Nanking, but refrained from putting in the eyes, on the ground that if he did so the dragons would fly away. People laughed at this, so he finally yielded, and put in the eyes of one dragon. In a few minutes thunder and lightning dashed the wall to atoms, and one dragon was seen soaring away, the other three remaining intact.

Again, at a temple near Soochow he painted a dragon which, whenever there was wind and rain, appeared to jump about. Chang then painted a chain around the dragon's neck, after which it always remained still.

For the temple at Nanking to the Supreme Being, founded by the Emperor himself, Chang painted a Buddhist picture into which he introduced Confucius and the Ten Sages of old. The astonished Emperor asked what he meant by this; to which Chang replied, "Some day men will look to these for aid." This ambiguous saying was held to be fulfilled when, under the second

Emperor of the Later Chou dynasty, in the first half of the 10th century, there was a general spoliation of Buddhist temples, but this one was spared because of the presence of Confucius within its walls.

In another temple at Chinkiang the priests were much annoyed by the pigeons among the beams. Chang soon put an end to this by painting a falcon on the east wall and a kite on the west wall, which effectually frightened the pigeons away.

Liu Ch'ang-ch'ing, who in A.D. 757 was a Supervising Censor, and who left behind him a small collection of "Remains," is responsible for the following note.

"The picture of Buddhist priests from India is a genuine work of Chang Sêng-yu of the Liang dynasty. As originally painted, it contained two priests; but during the troubled times which ensued, it was bandied about from place to place for many years, and was finally divided into two pictures, one of which came into the possession of a eunuch under the T'ang dynasty, named Lu. Mr. Lu, who had been ailing for a long time, was at the point of death when he suddenly dreamed that the priest in his picture appeared before him and said, I have a companion, who has been separated from me for the space of a hundred years. He is now at Lo-yang, in the family of a man named Li, who greatly prizes him. If you can bring us two together again, I will exert my influence to avert misfortune from you. When Mr. Lu awaked, he sent to enquire, and found that the facts were as stated. He got hold of the man Li, and by paying him a large sum of money obtained from him the other priest, and thus brought the two together again."

Of course Mr. Lu was immediately restored to health, and there was as usual some marvelling at the dispensations of Providence. What is more interesting is a careful "pedigree," showing the hands through which the picture passed before reaching its resting-place in the writer's own collection, some two hundred and fifty years after its creation by Chang Sêng-yu.

"It would be impossible," says one writer, "to enumerate all the marvellous pictures of Chang Sêng-yu." From a long list the following may be taken as specimens: "Dīpankara Buddha," "Maitrēya Buddha," "Vimalakirti," "Fighting Dragons," "The

Emperor Wu Ti of the Han dynasty killing a Monster," "Men, Horses, and Weapons," "The Emperor Wu Ti of the Liang dynasty," "Pheasant Shooting," and "A Drunken Buddhist Priest."

Although nothing of Chang Sêng-yu's art now remains to testify to his skill, and justify the esteem in which he was held by his contemporaries, yet we know that four hundred and fifty years after his death works of his were still in existence. For it has been recorded that "in the year 999, an official named Shu Ya, finding ten illustrations by Chang of the Hill and Water Classic (*Shan hai ching*) preserved in the Imperial Library, caused them to be repainted," or as perhaps one ought to say "restored." The *Hsüan ho hua p'u*, which must have been published in the 12th century, mentions sixteen of Chang's pictures as being then in the Imperial collection.

Critics are at one as to the force and originality of his work, and claim for him an excellence transcending the limits of the Six Canons. "His ideas gush forth like a flowing spring, urged by some unseen Power; and with one or two strokes of the brush, realisation is achieved." He taught his two sons, and both of them attained some distinction as artists.

The Liang dynasty is so dominated by Chang Sêng-yu that all other names are dwarfed into insignificance. Of the latter, one may be mentioned, chiefly for the following incident.

T'ao Hung-ching was a painter who preferred retirement to public life. The Emperor Wu Ti, 502—550, made repeated efforts to bring him to Court, and at length T'ao sent back a painting as his final answer. It was a picture of two oxen, one of which was wandering at will between brook and meadow, while the other, with a beautifully gilded headstall, was led by the herdsman, who occasionally touched it up with a goad.

Of Hsiao Pên, too, it was said—this story is one of the perennials of China—that "on the small surface of a fan he could place scenery extending to 10,000 *li*. He was however averse to parting with any of his pictures, painting only for his own amusement."

The Emperor Yüan Ti, 552—555, is not given among the painters of his dynasty; but we read in the *Family Exhortations* of the well-known scholar Yen Chih-t'ui, who died in 595,

"Painting too is an excellent occupation, and one in which many eminent men of past ages have been proficient. I possess a round white silk fan with a "Cicada and Sparrow" painted on it by the Emperor Yüan Ti of the Liang dynasty; also the picture of a horse by the same artist."

This Emperor is responsible for a somewhat rhapsodical note on the art of painting, which has been preserved, but not quite in its entirety.

"Of all things in heaven and earth to which names can be given, the most divinely inspired is Nature. She calls into being forms of marvellous and subtle shape; she traces the outlines of intersecting hill-ranges; she rises to sublime heights from profound conceptions, or with facile brush limns the infinitesimally minute. Thence we pass to the painted wall, and by the power of genius transfer to it the throbbing mountain and the roaring cataract." For feet and inches, we are told, there is an immutable standard, whereas trees and rocks and clouds and water have no gauge from which they do not vary.

A story is told of Chu-tan-hsiu-po-to-lo, King of the I-to-li country; how in a dream he was carried to China, and saw the founder of the Liang dynasty. On awaking, he painted the Emperor's portrait from memory, and afterwards sent an embassy bearing tribute, with a painter attached to the suite, who actually painted the Emperor from life. When the embassy returned, the two portraits were found to be identical in every respect.

Here follow several minor dynasties, which may be briefly disposed of. The short duration of these dynasties, and the general unrest throughout the Empire, were not favourable to the growth and development either of literature or of art, though during the period covered we find the names of no fewer than forty painters.

The House of Toba lasted, it is true, for some two hundred years, ruling in the north simultaneously with the pure Chinese dynasties in the south. But its monarchs were Tartars, and more fitted to cut throats than patronise painters. They may be entirely ignored.

Under the Northern Ch'í dynasty, A.D. 550—557, we have

Yang Tzŭ-hua, who evidently made some mark in his day, to judge from the stories which have gathered about his name. A horse, painted by him on a wall, was said to have been heard in the night kicking about and whinnying as if it called for water and hay. Once he painted the picture of a dragon, and forthwith clouds began to collect around. He received the title of Inspired Painter, and Yen Li-pên (see *post*) said that of all painters who had ever lived Yang was in the front rank in subtlety and grace; "from his work nothing can be taken away, and to it nothing can be added." Several pictures of his are mentioned, one including lions.

Liu Sha-kuei was a contemporary of the above. He is famed for having painted on a wall some fighting sparrows, which the Emperor mistook for live ones, and tried to frighten away. The mere fact that this evergreen tale was told of him is a voucher for some measure of skill.

Li P'ing, an official of this date, painted portraits of Confucius and his seventy-two disciples, and hung them around his public hall. These took the fancy of one of his superiors, who actually carried them off; whereupon Li painted two pictures, one of a man treading on a tiger's tail and the other of a man walking on thin ice, based upon two lines in the *Odes*, and hung them up as a warning to persons to behave themselves with caution.

Under the Sui dynasty, A.D. 581—618, names of painters become more numerous and more prominent, as though in preparation for the grand galaxy of artists so shortly to appear. In fact, Chan Tzŭ-ch'ien has actually been called the Founder of T'ang Painting. "He first sketched in his subject with exceeding minuteness, and then with the application of colour brought forth as it were from a mist, men, animals, gods, etc., all instinct with life." Again, "his horses on their legs seemed positively to be kicking their heels." Among his most famous pictures was one, on white paper made from hemp, of the magnificent city of Ch'ang-an, with its horses and chariots and pomp of wealth and power. Another was a hunting picture, and a third "Chu Mai-ch'ên Spilling the Water." This last refers to a man whose wife left him because of his poverty. Later on, he rose to high

rank, while she sank into destitution. Then she wanted to be taken back. "If you can pick up this water," he said, dashing a bowl of it to the ground, "you may come back."

Chan painted four famous pictures, known as the "Four Conveyances," meaning carts, boats, sledges for mud, and iron-spiked boots for mountaineering; and in the early part of the 12th century these pictures were still in the Palace collection. "The Emperor constantly amused himself with them, sometimes unable to tear himself away for the space of a whole day. Unfortunately, there were only three of the originals; the fourth, 'Travelling by Water,' being a copy, put in to complete the number. One day an official, who had just reached Lo-yang, heard that at the house of an old family in the city there was such a painting. He sent off at once to secure the refusal of it, and when he came to look at it, he found that it was indeed the missing picture, and promptly forwarded it to the Palace. So true is it that works of divine inspiration (if separated) must always come together again."

The following verse was inscribed by an admirer upon one of Chan Tzŭ-ch'ien's pictures,

So long as the pencil of Tzŭ-ch'ien is here,
From loss of the landscape we've nothing to fear;
The flowerets may fade, and the butterflies die,
He'll stock us anew with them all by and by.

The *Hsüan ho hua p'u* mentions twenty of his pictures as still existing in the Imperial collection above mentioned.

Tung Po-jen was such a talented young man that he was known in his native district as "Sea of Wisdom." He and Chan Tzŭ-ch'ien reached the capital simultaneously, coming from widely distant parts of the Empire. "Both of them were self-taught, owing nothing to any masters. Their pictures were true to life, but possessed of a subtle charm beyond that which mere technique can give. The country around (the capital) was flat, and there was no inspiration to be found in the scenery; so that they had to fall back on war-horses and women, which were not altogether in their line. Comparing the two, it might be said that Tung's chariots and horses were quite as good as Chan's, while Chan's ornamental buildings were not equal to Tung's."

Yang Ch'i-tan seems to have been well thought of in his day. He was engaged with two contemporaries to paint the walls of "a small pagoda" in a temple at the capital (Ch'ang-an). Yang was to do the four outer walls, and the others the four inner walls. He kept his work covered up with matting; but one of his colleagues managed to get a look at it on the sly, and then said to him, "You needn't cover up your paintings; no one will ever want to steal from them." The latter also asked Yang what his stock-in-trade was; whereupon Yang took him out and showed him all the palaces and gateways, robes and hats, chariots and horses, saying, to the great astonishment of the other, "These are my stock-in-trade."

The next name is interesting quite apart from any proficiency in painting. "Wei-ch'ih Po-chih-na was a man from the West.¹ He was good at painting outside nations, and pictures of Buddha. He gave himself the above name, and is now known as the Elder Wei-ch'ih." He painted "Six Barbarian Nations," "A Precious Foreign Tree," and "A Brahman." At various temples he painted as frescos, "Manjusri with the 1000 Alms-bowls," "The Subjection of Mara," besides Buddhas and Bôdhisatvas innumerable. The Wei-ch'ih's proper were a branch of the Wei (Toba) family, Tartars who came originally from the east. Why this name was adopted, it is very difficult to say, unless because it was similar in sound to the name by which he was known in Khoten, as is the case with the names of foreigners in China at the present day.

At the close of the Sui dynasty we find mention of the Buddhist priest, Po-mo, who is said to have painted the Lohans or Arhats, the sixteen (now eighteen) immediate disciples of Buddha, well-known figures on Chinese porcelain and elsewhere. This is important, as the first representation of the Lohans has been wrongly attributed by Mr. Watters to Kuan Hsiu, about A.D. 880, nearly three hundred years later.

Another priest, Ka-fo-t'ò, is remarkable, according to Chang Yen-yüan of the T'ang dynasty, for having painted pictures of the "men of the Fu-lin country." Now Fu-lin appears on the Nestorian Tablet, and has been variously identified as Byzantium,

¹ We know from the biography of his son, who was called the Younger Wei ch'ih (see *post*), that the family came from Khoten.

Bethlehem, etc., and is said by the Chinese to be identical with Ta-ch'in. Ka-fo-t'o himself is described as a native of India, whose devotion to the Buddhist faith had gained for his ministrations unusual efficacy; and the first Emperor of the Sui dynasty is said to have built for him a special temple where his pictures were long afterwards to be seen. He also produced pictures of the animals of foreign countries, and of supernatural beings, evil and good. Two questions here suggest themselves: (1) Did Ka-fo-t'o pass through Fu-lin on his way from India to China; and if so, (2) where is Fu-lin?

The History of the Sui dynasty gives a long list of books, such as the *Odes*, *Rites*, *Tso's Commentary*, and the *Filial Piety Classic*, all of which were embellished with illustrations. Celestial and terrestrial maps are also mentioned, as well as pictures of official robes, regalia, military evolutions, felicitous plants, eminent personages, etc. etc.

CHAPTER III

A. D. 600—900

The T'ang Dynasty

The T'ang dynasty, A.D. 618—905, is inseparably associated in the minds of the Chinese people with poetry, painting, and music. From its three hundred years of existence, some three hundred names of painters have come 'down to us, of which only a few can be mentioned here.

Passing over several Imperial Princes, we first come upon two brothers, sons of an amateur painter, both of whom were distin-



Mainly interesting for the subject. The entire absence of background is unusual, but this may be an omission of the wood-engraver's. L.B.—See p. 40.

guished in art. Yen Li-tê, known to the Japanese as En-riu-toku, the elder and the lesser light,—though one Chinese critic says

"the two Yen were both in the first class,"—was especially noted for his pictures "of the people of strange countries, and of such-like weird and uncanny subjects, in which, since the Liang and Wei dynasties, no one has surpassed him."

Now about A.D. 630, the very year in which Yen Li-tê was preferred to high office, the Arab mission under Wahb-Abi Kabcha reached Ch'ang-an, the capital; and in 631 the Nestorian Church first introduced the Christian religion into China. By this light it is not difficult to see who were the strange peoples who sat for their portraits to a Chinese painter of the seventh century, a point which might otherwise have seemed doubtful and obscure. Other pictures attributed to this artist are, "Fighting Cocks," "A Princess bringing Barbarians to Allegiance," "Imperial Sacrifices," etc., etc.

Yen Li-pên, known to the Japanese as En-riu-hon, was, like his elder brother, in official employ, and by A.D. 668 had risen to the highest rank. One day, when the Emperor was amusing himself in his park, he saw a strange and beautiful bird, and was so much interested that he bade Yen paint a picture of it. Yen was forthwith dubbed "The Painter," and went home in a rage, and said to his son, "Here am I, a not altogether unsuccessful student of literature, who can only come to the front as a painter, as if I were a menial. Take care that you do not give way to a hobby of the kind." Nevertheless he was a very prolific artist. He painted portraits of "The Eighteen Scholars," and also of a number of "Meritorious Officials" for the Imperial galleries, and gained the sobriquet of the Colour Magician. It is further stated that he too painted many of the foreigners "who brought tribute to Court upon the establishment of the Empire," and his treatment of human figures, hats, robes, chariots, etc., was considered to be exceptionally fine.

One famous picture of his was that of a Prince killing a tiger with a single arrow; another was called "Brushing the Elephant," and represents a man standing on an elephant with a besom in his hand and sweeping the animal's back. A sheep is looking on, and around are standing six persons, *viz.*, two priests with shaven heads and hands in an attitude of prayer, a boy holding a box, and three others, one apparently a woman. There is a

second box on a cloud in the sky above. It is not easy to say what this picture refers to, nor to gather from a woodcut which has survived, dated 1588, that the painter was a great artist in our sense of the term.

Yen Li-pên paid a visit to Ching-chou, and there obtained a picture by Chang Sêng-yu. At first he could make nothing of it, and declared that "Chang's reputation was ill-deserved." Seeing it again on the morrow, he admitted that "among recent painters Chang was a fine artist;" and on the third day he frankly proclaimed that in the long run "no artist ever gets more fame than he is entitled to." After that he remained before the picture for ten days without going home to bed; he simply lay down in front of it.

It will be remembered that Chang Sêng-yu had painted a picture of "A Drunken Buddhist Priest." This picture was a source of much annoyance to devout Buddhists, for the members of the Taoist hierarchy, in their long struggle against Buddhism, were always bringing it forward as a reproach to a fraternity one of whose commandments said, "Thou shalt drink no wine." The result was that the Buddhist community subscribed several hundred thousand *cash*, and prevailed upon Yen Li-pên to paint for them a picture of "A Drunken Taoist Priest." We can judge approximately from this anecdote what was the sum paid to a fashionable artist in the seventh century. A thousand *cash* would be about the equivalent of an ounce of silver.

Over one picture attributed to Yen Li-pên, a considerable controversy has raged. The subject was "An Emperor teaching his Children," and his Majesty is described by an anonymous connoisseur, who somehow came into possession of the picture, as "sitting with his arms on a table, his divine countenance full of dignity, and his eyes of piercing brilliancy, imparting a life-like appearance to the portrait. The children are handsome-looking, and keep their eyes fixed on their books. A general is standing by in a respectful attitude, as though not daring to move, while all the time his martial spirit is seen as it were peeping out from beneath the cloak of an enforced decorum. A servant and two soldiers, each in keeping with his character, complete the picture, which is further stamped with the seal of

the Hsüan ho Hall,"—these last words meaning that the work was recognised as genuine so late as the beginning of the 12th century.

The critic goes on to say that this picture is not mentioned in the *Hsüan ho hua p'u*, which gives the titles of forty-two of Yen's works, and that therefore its genuineness has been disputed; but he adds that when he came to have it "properly cleaned, and a kind of film removed from the surface, the colours shone out so brightly on the lustrous silk as to place it quite beyond the limits of the forger's skill."

Huang Ssü-tao, the archaeologist and art-critic (died 1117), for a long time doubted the genuineness of Yen Li-pên's "A Literary Club," on the ground that certain officials in the picture had bags or cases for their insignia of rank, which he thought had not come into use until some sixty years later. Careful investigation, however, showed him that bags had been employed early enough to appear as the artist had painted them, and he consequently admitted the genuineness of the work.

From the pencil of one or other of the brothers Yen comes in all probability the picture of "A Man of Ta-ch'in" (Syria), as seen in the "Account of Strange Nations," a fourteenth-century copy of which is in the University Library at Cambridge. Also, the very curious woodcut, entitled "Three in One," consisting of a figure of Christ, a Nestorian priest kneeling at his feet with one hand upraised in benediction, and another priest standing behind (see p. 37). Nestorian Christianity soon disappeared from China, leaving the famous Tablet in Si-ngan Fu as a witness that it had reached the Far East,—an honour which must in future be shared by this unpretending picture, which contributes one more to the early portraits of Christ. Three Chinese characters to the left signify "May not be rubbed" = Sacred, and were probably inserted at the instance of the Nestorian priests.

Wei-ch'ih I-sêng was the son of Wei-ch'ih Po-chih-na. "He painted men of foreign nations and Bôdhisatvas. He could produce fine lines by grasping his brush firmly as though bending a coil of iron wire, or bold lines by strong sweeps of the brush full of vigour." One of his chief pictures was "Avalôkitêsvara with the thousand hands and eyes, the extreme beauty of which was beyond all words;" and he was also specially noted for his

pictures of certain flowers. Of his works generally it was said that "the accessories are entirely foreign and different from those of China," he being, like his father, a native of Khoten. As a painter, he was ranked by many as "not inferior to Yen Li-pên."

Chang Hsiao-shih is known as the first painter of the Buddhist Purgatory. His picture is said to have shown a weird murky atmosphere, and the terrible tortures were so realistic that people declared he must have been down in the lower world and seen them with his own eyes. The great Wu Tao-tzŭ, to whom we shall shortly come, based his own more elaborate picture on that of Chang Hsiao-shih.

Hsieh Chi, "whose calligraphy was famous all over the Empire, and whose paintings were also of a high class," was an official who rose to be President of the Board of Rites and Junior Guardian of the Heir Apparent. A political intrigue was his undoing, and in A.D. 713 he committed suicide. He is known chiefly as a painter of one of China's most popular birds, the crane, an emblem of long life ever since Wang Tzŭ-ch'iao (6th century B.C.) flew up to heaven on the back of a yellow crane, and joined the ranks of the Immortals. Some fifty years after the painter's death, Tu Fu, the eminent poet, was gazing upon a fresco of a crane by Hsieh Chi, when he broke into an impromptu, of which two lines run,

The wall, and bird so deftly limned,
Seem flying, every hue undimmed.

A critic says, "The pictures by Hsieh Chi, Minister of State under the T'ang dynasty, can only be classified as inspired. At a shrine in Ch'êng-tu (capital of the province of Ssü-ch'uan) there are two walls covered with a number of birds, beasts, and human beings from his brush, all of which are instinct with life and movement, and entitle him to be called the first painter of his day."

Li Ssü-hsün was a great-grandson of the founder of the T'ang dynasty. When the Empress Wu usurped the throne, he threw up his official post and went into hiding. On the restoration, he was appointed to high office, and in 713 was made a general. It is as a landscape-painter,—“the greatest of the dynasty,” says

one critic, "so that no one up to this day has been his peer," says Ou-yang Hsiu, writing in the middle of the 11th century,—that he is remembered, and especially as the founder of the Northern School, of which school brilliant colouring seems to have been the chief characteristic (see *Wang Wei*).

"Under the T'ang dynasty, painting was for the first time divided into Northern and Southern schools. The former was founded by Li Ssü-hsün and his son, who painted their landscapes in brilliant colours, and whose tradition was carried on by Chao Kan, Chao Po, Chü Po-hsiao, of the Sung dynasty, down to Ma-yüan, Hsia Kuei, and others."

About the year 745, Li was ordered to paint a door-screen for the Emperor Ming Huang. A few days after its completion, the Emperor said to him, "Your skill is more than mortal; at night I can hear the plash of the water in your picture." This is perhaps a sufficient testimonial. But in his day there was a perfect craze for pictures by "the General," and legend soon became busy with his name. "On one occasion he was painting a fish, and had completed his work, all save the usual surroundings of river plants. Just then some one knocked at the door, and he stepped out to see who it was. On his return, the picture was gone; and it was subsequently found by a servant in a pond whither it had been blown by a gust of wind. The fish, however, had disappeared, leaving only a blank piece of paper. Then for a joke he painted several fishes and threw them into the pond; but although the picture remained in the water all night, the fishes did not manage to get away."

Wu Tao-yüan, better known by his style as Wu Tao-tzū (Japanese *Go Doshi*), stands by universal consent at the head of all Chinese painters, ancient and modern. He was born near the capital, which was then at Lo-yang in Honan. "A poverty-stricken orphan, but endowed with a divine nature, he had not assumed the cap of puberty ere he was already a master artist, and had flooded Lo-yang with his works." The Emperor soon heard of him, and gave him a post at Court. About 720 he painted his famous portrait of General P'ei, who did not sit to him, but danced a sword-dance before him, the result being that Wu turned out a picture in which people said "he must have

been helped by the gods." About 750 the Emperor conceived a longing to see the scenery on the Chia-ling river in Ssüch'uan, and sent Wu Tao-tzŭ to paint it. Wu came back with nothing in the way of sketches; and when the Emperor asked for an explanation, he replied, "I have it all in my heart." Then he went into one of the halls of the palace, and "in a single day he threw off a hundred miles of landscape."

At that date Li Ssŭ-hsün was much in vogue as a landscape-painter, and the Emperor bade him too give a taste of his quality in the same hall. Li took several months to complete his picture; but on seeing the two works together the Emperor exclaimed, "Li Ssŭ-hsün's picture of months, and Wu Tao-tzŭ's picture of a day, are both masterpieces indeed."

In one of the private apartments of the Palace Wu painted five dragons, the scales of which were so lifelike that the creatures seemed to move; and whenever it rained, a thick mist came from the picture, dragons being associated by the Chinese with vapour and clouds.

The lines in which he excelled were numerous, including human beings, Buddhas, gods and devils, birds and beasts, landscape, buildings, and vegetation. One writer tells us that "he was fond of wine and feats of strength, and that as a preliminary to work he always made himself tipsy." Another says that he had a keen eye to proper remuneration for his work. We also learn, but without further detail, that "in landscape he initiated a school of his own;" on the other hand, he was thought to have been "a re-incarnation of Chang Sêng-yu."

A great number of Wu's religious pictures are described more or less in detail. There was "Purgatory," already mentioned, "the sight of which not only made the beholder's hair stand on end," but inspired the butchers and fishmongers at the capital with such horror that many of them abandoned the trades against which all the anathemas of Buddhism were hurled, and sought a livelihood in other directions. Huang Po-ssŭ, the art-critic, wrote in 1116 the following note on the above work. "This picture, which was painted by Wu Tao-tzŭ, is very different from those now to be seen in temples and pagodas. It has no 'Knife Forest' (where the wicked are impaled on swords), no cauldron of boiling

water, no ox-headed or green-faced lictors; and yet its gloomy horrors are such as to make beholders sweat and their hair stand on end, themselves shivering all the time, though it may not be cold. It has caused men to seek after virtue and give up evil practices; after which, who can say that painting is only a small art?"

In incidental connection with the paintings of Wu Tao-tzŭ we read that in 746 "the likenesses of Li Lin-fu and Ch'ên Hsi-lich (two well-known statesmen) were carved in stone." The Buddhist rock-sculptures at Lung-mên in the province of Honan have recently (*Journal Asiatique*, Juillet—Août 1902) been assigned to the year A.D. 642.

Then there is his great picture of Kuan-yin (Avalôkitêsvara), now popularly known as the Goddess of Mercy, which as seen in the modern woodcut, scarcely suggests the idea of an acknowledged masterpiece. In Chinese eyes, however, it is important as definitely settling the sex of Kuan-yin, over which there has been much controversy among critics ignorant of the real facts of the case. There is also the picture of the dragon combing Dêvadatta's beard, "the strokes in which are as though of iron;" that of a female dêva holding an incense-burner, "with a sly look in her eye as though she were about to speak;" and especially one Buddhistic picture in which "the heavenly clothes worn by the Richis (angels) flutter so as to make one actually feel the wind blowing." There is also a picture of Vimalakîrti lying sick, Manjusri calling to enquire after him, and a female dêva scattering flowers; another of Shâkyamuni subduing Mâra, the Evil One; and again another of the great Teacher in a peaceful attitude, surrounded by ten disciples, "the shading of the mouth making the picture look extremely lifelike." Altogether, Wu Tao-tzŭ is said to have painted over three hundred frescos on the walls of temples alone, with a variety of detail in each case that was truly astounding. The *Hsüan ho hua p'u* gives the titles of ninety-three of his pictures still to be found in the Imperial collection during the 12th century.

Most famous of all his works is the grand picture,—or rather pictures, for several were painted,—of Shâkyamuni Buddha entering into Nirvâna. One original is said to be preserved in the mo-

nastery of Manjuji near Kioto, Japan; and an engraving of it was published in Anderson's *Pictorial Arts of Japan*, 1886. Mr. Kohitsu, the eminent art-critic, is not prepared to say that this very picture is actually from the brush of Wu Tao-tzŭ. At the worst, however, it may be regarded as a very early copy, and its accuracy may to some extent be tested by the following description from the *Wên chien hou lu* of a similar picture which once existed in China:—

“At the K'ai-yüan temple in Fêng-hsiang Fu, on one of the inner walls of the great hall, Wu Tao-tzŭ painted incidents in the career of Buddha from his birth, his period of preparation, and his appearance as a preacher of the Law, down to his entry into Nirvâna. The picture includes scenery, buildings, human figures, birds and beasts, to the number of several thousands. It is the most beautiful and perfect work of all ages. While Buddha is passing into Nirvâna, the bhikshus are beating their breasts and stamping in lamentation, as though utterly beyond self-control. Even the birds of the air and the beasts of the field are wailing and knocking their heads on the ground. Only Buddha himself is placid as usual, with no trace of anguish in his face. How could the painter have thus fathomed the mysteries of life and death? The answer is, that he was inspired.

“The above refers to the year 742. Fêng-hsiang Fu is now in the hands of our enemies, and its hamlets and buildings are but heaps of ruins; therefore I have made this record.”

More than once Wu Tao-tzŭ painted the great magician, Chung K'uei, who could exorcise demons. In one instance the magician was represented “dressed in a blue robe, with one foot bare, blind of one eye, a tablet at his waist, with dishevelled hair, holding a demon in his left hand as he gouges out its eye with his right,—a powerful work and a model of painting.”

On another occasion, the Emperor Ming Huang, who had suffered from fever for nearly a month, saw Chung K'uei in a dream, fighting on his behalf against the fever demon. “When his Majesty awaked, the disease had left him; he therefore sent a command to Wu Tao-tzŭ to paint a picture of the occurrence. The latter had no sooner received this order than he seemed to

see the whole scene, and at once completed the picture and took it in to the Emperor. His Majesty gazed upon it for some time, and then struck the table with his hand and said, Minister, you must have dreamt the same dream as Ourselves; or how could you have made your picture so like as this?"

Here is another story. "Wu Tao-tzŭ once went to see some priests, and met with a somewhat rude reception. He therefore drew a donkey on a wall in the temple, and at night the furniture and other paraphernalia of the priests were all kicked to pieces. The priests were sure that this was Wu's handiwork, and begged him to erase the drawing, after which there was no more trouble."

We are told however that "in Wu Tao-tzŭ's pictures it was not the wealth of detail which so much struck the beholder as the extraordinary power he possessed of producing his effects by masterly brush-work. Further, many of his frescos were merely ink sketches, to which later generations have never been able to supply colouring. In painting aureoles, he would use no measurements, nor even compasses, but would trace the outline with a single stroke."

At a certain temple, about the year 806, there was an old man over eighty years of age, who remembered that when Wu Tao-tzŭ painted a god with an aureole, all the people of Ch'ang-an, young and old, scholars and labourers alike, gathered around the picture in a dense wall. The aureole was produced by a few rapid strokes, which seemed as if driven by a whirlwind; "and everybody declared that his hand must have been guided by a god."

While on the subject of aureoles, the remarks of a writer of the 11th century, named Shên Kua, may perhaps be quoted. "When painters paint Buddha's aureole, they make it flat and round like a fan. If his body is deflected, then the aureole is also deflected,—a serious blunder. Such a one is only thinking of Buddha as a graven image, and does not know that the roundness of his aureole is everlasting. In like manner, when Buddha is represented as walking, his aureole is made to tail out behind him, and this is called the wind-borne aureole,—also a serious blunder. For Buddha's aureole is a divine aureole

which even a universe-wrecking hurricane could not move, still less could our light breezes flutter it."

Another writer says, "Wu Tao-tzŭ excelled in technique, and must be regarded as the inspired painter of all generations. In his early years he used a fine brush, but in middle life he used a brush like a cabbage."

Wu Tao-tzŭ took for his "master" Chang Sêng-yu; that is to say, he studied the works, and tried to form his style on that of the older painter. "Yang Hui-chih," says one writer, "was engaged with Wu Tao-tzŭ in studying Chang Sêng-yu, when he noticed that his colleague was fast outstripping him in the race. Unable to brook defeat, he gave up the pursuit of painting and took to modelling in clay, ultimately attaining to undisputed preeminence in that line. Ah! if in an art such as painting one is not willing to fall short, how much less should we be ready to do so in greater and more far-reaching undertakings!"

Neither of these artists escaped attack from their contemporaries, the following doggerel being freely circulated in the capital:—

Tao-tzŭ's skill, and Hui-chih's too,
Both are stolen from Chang Sêng-yu.

As nothing more will be said of the second, it may be mentioned here that "the portraits modelled in clay by Yang Hui-chih were cut in stone by Yüan Ming," who was also a painter.

This extended notice of Wu Tao-tzŭ, whose name is still a household word in China, may be fitly brought to a close by the story of his apotheosis. I myself have failed to find the Chinese text; but Anderson, who gathered his brief notes on Chinese art secondhand from Japanese sources, gives it, with an illustration, in his *Pictorial Arts of Japan*, p. 484, in the following words:—

"In the palace of Ming Hwang (the Emperor), the walls were of great size, and upon one of these the Emperor ordered Wu Tao-tsz' to paint a landscape. The artist prepared his materials, and concealing the wall with curtains commenced his work. After a little while he drew aside the veil, and there lay a glorious scene, with mountains, forests, clouds, men, birds, and all things as in nature. While the Emperor gazed upon it with

admiration, Wu Tao-tsz', pointing to a certain part of the picture, said, Behold this temple grot at the foot of the mountain—within it dwells a spirit. Then clapping his hands, the gate of the cave suddenly opened. The interior is beautiful beyond conception, continued the artist; permit me to show the way, that your Majesty may behold the marvels it contains. He passed within, turning round to beckon his patron to follow, but in a moment the gateway closed, and before the amazed monarch could advance a step, the whole scene faded away, leaving the wall white as before the contact of the painter's brush. And Wu Tao-tsz' was never seen again."

Lu Lêng-chia was a pupil under Wu Tao-tzŭ, and acquired some of the master's skill. We hear of him as a painter in A.D. 757. He painted very fine pictures, producing extensive landscapes on a small surface. His forte however lay in Buddhistic subjects, and "The Sixteen Lohans" by him, on a very small scale, was accounted a good picture. So also was his "Buddha," in which he departed from tradition and produced quite a new rendering. Not content with such successes, he stole a motive which Wu Tao-tzŭ had used at a certain temple, and passed it off as his own at another temple. One day, to his great astonishment, Wu happened to come across this imitation of his work; whereupon he said to Lu, "Your style, which has hitherto been inferior to mine, is now equal to it. You have come to the end of your tether." A month later Lu Lêng-chia died.

Yang T'ing-kuang was a painter who excelled in Buddhistic pictures, painted very much after the style of Wu Tao-tzŭ, with whom he was contemporary. At one temple he painted a picture of Samanta Bhadra with such success that rumour said "his brush was tipped with a *śarîra* (relic) which came down from heaven for the purpose." "About 750, at an assembly, Yang secretly sketched the older painter; and when the latter saw it, he exclaimed in horror, I am old and ugly; why take such a portrait? He then sighed, and admitted that his days of superiority were over."

We might sympathise more with the veteran artist in his fall, but for the recorded fact that when another contemporary,

Huang-fu Chên, showed great promise and appeared likely to contest the headship, "Wu hired men to assassinate him."

Fêng Shao-chêng flourished about A.D. 730. He is said to have painted some dragons which put an end to a serious drought at the capital. On four walls "he first sketched the dragons squirming as though about to break into a downpour; and then, ere the colours were half on, wind and clouds seemed to be generated by the brush, and the Emperor and his suite saw water standing on the dragons' scales." Shortly afterwards a white dragon emerged from the wall, and there was a torrential fall of rain.

His reputation, however, was made by his birds,—"kites, falcons, fowls, and pheasants, all of which he painted truthfully as regards form, bearing, beak, eyes, feet, claws, and plumage."

Wei Wu-t'ien, another of the painters who graced the Court of the Emperor Ming Huang, was already famous for his animals when "in the year 756, some foreign nation sent a lion as tribute. Wei painted a picture of it which was extraordinarily like. The lion was subsequently sent back to its own country, but the picture remained; and whenever it was unrolled for exhibition, any animals which chanced to see it were all overcome with fear." He also painted, by command, a picture of two boars transfixed by one arrow shot by the Emperor in the chase. (See also *Ch'ên Hung*.)

Several pictures by Chang Hsüan have been recorded among the notable works of the T'ang dynasty, *viz.* "A Female Juggler;" "Wet-nurse and Child;" "Playing on Skin Drums" (these were introduced from Central Asia); "A Swing;" "A Night Frolic;" "The Full Moon;" and others. He excelled in painting women and young girls, and introduced the novelty of touching the female ear with red.

Ch'ê Tao-chêng was a skilled painter of Buddhistic subjects, but is chiefly known as having been sent by the Emperor Ming Huang to Khoten to obtain a picture of Vâsraavana (the Hindu god of wealth), in whose honour a grand temple was afterwards built. In 725 Ch'ê was appointed Guardian of the Sacred Mountain in Shantung, and there produced a replica of the above

work, which was considered to be one of the wonders of the age.

Yang Kuei-fei, the ill-fated favourite of the Emperor Ming Huang, was painted in a great variety of poses. Among the most curious of these portraits must have been "The Lady Yang with the Toothache," under which a poet wrote that here it was a case of a single tooth, but at Ma-wei, where she was strangled, her whole body ached, and that as a consequence of the revolution, attributed to her malign influence, the whole empire ached.

She was also painted in the act of mounting on horseback; on which a critic pointed out that whereas the mere act of mounting a horse is the same at all times, yet it is within the power of the artist to express the different circumstances of each case. Thus it can be seen by the initiated whether the Lady Yang was leisurely mounting her palfrey, to the sounds of mirth and song, on her way to the garoo-wood pavilion, or whether, as in the present case, she was scrambling into the saddle on her hurried flight to Ma-wei and death.

We now come to Wang Wei, the great poet, known to the Japanese as Ō-i, who was almost equally famous as a painter. It was indeed said by Su Tung-p'ō that "his poems were pictures, and his pictures poems."

Born in 699, he entered into public life, and rose to high office. He was carried off by the great rebel of the day; and on the latter's death, he had some trouble to save himself from the hands of the executioner. He finally retired to a country house, and ended his days at the age of sixty in the enjoyment of such pleasures as may be derived from poetry, painting, and music, and with such consolations as may be afforded by the Buddhist religion, in which he had always been a firm believer. We are told that "his pictures were full of thought, and rivalled even Nature herself; also that "his ideas transcended the bounds of mortality." He is chiefly remembered as a landscape-painter, but his portraits are said to have been fine performances. He painted his friend and brother-poet Mêng Hao-jan, to whom also he addressed the well-known adieu:—

Dismounted, o'er wine we had said our last say;
Then I whisper, "Dear friend, tell me, whither away?"

Landscape. Painted in the style of WANG WEI of the T'ang dynasty, by CHAO MÈNG-FU of the Yüan dynasty.

In the British Museum.

Genuine examples of the landscape art of the T'ang period, if any indeed exist, must be excessively rare. Wang Wei, famous as a poet, is famous also as one of the greatest of T'ang painters. He was the originator of a new style in landscape, and seems to have been the founder of that school of idealist painting which was later to become so influential in the south. Hence this imitation of his manner by so great a master as Chao Mêng-fu has a double importance. It shows us the beauty of the later artist's brushwork, but it also reveals to us a glimpse of the great lost landscape of the T'ang. The fragment reproduced is part of a roll, over 17 feet long, painted in few but rich colours on warm brown silk. The whole is continuous; verdant valleys guarded by fantastic crags that glow gem-like with colours of lapis and jade; water widening and narrowing along the foreground and fed by plunging torrents; deer in parks, groves of bamboo, roofs of nestling villages,—all this yields at last to open sea, with remote mountains melting into sky on shadowy coasts beyond. The picture is signed, dated (A.D. 1309), and inscribed as 'in the style of Wang Wei.' Without the modern and 'intimate' feeling of the Sung, the T'ang landscape, if we may judge from this picture, showed an extraordinary sense for the *romance* of nature. But to realize this sense one needs the colour of the original, which is more than half its charm.

L. B.



Landscape painted by Chao Meng-fu (*see* p. 137) in the style of Wang Wei.

"Alas," he replied, "I am sick of life's ills
 "And I long for repose on the slumbering hills.
 "But, oh seek not to pierce where my footsteps may stray:
 "The white clouds will soothe me for ever and ay."

Wang Wei has left behind him some notes on painting, but it is difficult to extract from them anything of practical use. "In painting landscape, the first thing is to proportion your mountains in tens of feet, your trees in feet, your horses in inches, and your human figures in tenths of inches. Distant men have no eyes; distant trees no branches; distant hills have no rocks, but are indistinct like eyebrows; and distant water has no waves, but reaches up and touches the clouds." "If there is rain, heaven and earth should be indistinguishable, and east and west unrecognisable. If there is wind without rain, only the branches (not the leaves) of trees should be seen. If there is rain without wind, the tops of the trees should bend down, travellers should have umbrellas and broad-brimmed hats, and fishermen should wear raincoats." He goes on to point out the general features which distinguish the same scene viewed at morning and at eve, in spring, summer, autumn, and winter; and he finishes up by saying that any one who could carry out his precepts would be a first-class painter of landscape.

One of his greater efforts was a picture of Pratyêka Buddha, with a Richi in attendance, dressed in a yellow robe, his hands uplifted in prayer, and his body bent in adoration. The features of this Richi were none other than those of the painter himself.

The following instance of his critical acumen is often quoted. "A stranger showed him a picture of a musical performance, the actual subject of which was unknown. Wang Wei looked at it a little while, and then said, They are playing the first "time-beat" of the third movement of *The Red Robe*. The stranger would not believe this; whereupon Wang Wei got some musicians to come in and play the piece over, and it was found to be as he had stated."

There is an interesting note on this subject by Shên Kua of the 11th century, illustrating the jealousy with which the truth is guarded by Chinese scholars.

"This is a very extraordinary feat. For in all pictures of

musical performances, it is only possible to express a single note, no matter whether the instrument be of metal, or stone, or wind, or stringed. But what piece is without this same note? How can it occur only at the first "time-beat" of the third movement of *The Red Robe*? It has been suggested that the reference is to a dance, and to some special note connected therewith; but this theory must likewise be rejected. For *The Red Robe* consists of thirteen movements, and in the first six there is no "time-beat;" only in the seventh do we get it for the first time, with the dance to follow.

"Collectors of calligraphy and pictures are often led by mere hearsay. If a picture is described as being by one of the old masters, people will vie with one another in their offers for it; but this is to criticise with the ears. Others again will inspect a picture by rubbing it with the hand, and if the colour does not come off, then it is a fine work of art; but this is even a grade lower than criticising with the ears, and is called "feeling the bones and listening for the sound."

Another short story, on similar lines but without the refutation, may be fitly quoted at this point. The great historian, philosopher, poet, and statesman of the 11th century, Ou-yang Hsiu, "picked up an old picture of a cluster of peonies with a cat sitting near by. He was quite at a loss to make out its inner meaning, until a friend who lived next door came in to see it. Oh, exclaimed the latter, the subject is Noon; and he proceeded to explain as follows. You notice, said he, that the flowers are wide open and dulled in hue, just as flowers are at midday. Then again, the pupils of the cat's eyes are like a black thread, as they always are at that hour. When flowers have dew on them the calyx is contracted and the hue is fresh; and in the morning and evening the pupils in a cat's eyes are always round. Thus skilfully," adds the editor, "is it possible to ferret out the underlying intentions of the men of old."

The remarks of Shên Kua which precede this digression were not written in depreciation of Wang Wei, of whom the former had a very high opinion, as may be gathered from another extract.

"In calligraphy and painting, soul is more important than form. Most of the good people who look at pictures can point

out some slight defect in shape, in position, or in colouring; but that is the extent of their range. As to those who penetrate to deeper principles, they are very hard to find. It has been said that Wang Wei in his pictures paid no attention whatever to the four seasons. With regard to flowers, he would introduce the peach, apricot, hibiscus, and water-lily into one and the same scene. I myself possess a picture of his in which there is a banana-tree covered with snow. The idea flashed through his mind, and was completed by his hand,—an inspiration of genius. But it is difficult to discuss this with the unwashed Does not the poet say

The old masters painted the spirit, they did not paint the form;
 Mei Shêng, when singing of things, left no emotion unexpressed.
 Those who can ignore the form and seize the spirit are few;
 But why not apply to verse what to painting applies so well?

Huang Po-ssü, the art-critic, also defends these inadvertencies of Wang Wei, and mentions others, such as painting the hand larger than the face, or a cart too big for the stable-door, all of which he dismisses as unimportant. "In the olden days," he says, "those who were skilled in the art of painting caught the spirit and ignored the form."

It may here be mentioned that Wang Wei's "Snow Banana," as the picture is called, was still in existence in the 14th century. It was seen by Yang Lien-fu, who wrote some verses upon it. The same writer who tells us this records the case of an official who actually saw a banana-tree covered with red flowers while the hills around were white with snow. This happened in Fuhkien, and the narrator adds, "People generally think the 'Snow Banana' a very extraordinary picture, not knowing that the mixture of snow and flowers is really an ideal combination."

The same writer says elsewhere in his essays that at the house of a high official in his neighbourhood there was a scroll picture of the famous spot to which Wang Wei retired at the close of his life, and that on it was the following inscription: "This picture was hidden by a man of the Sung dynasty in a lacquered bamboo tube, which was used for holding the door ajar. Years afterwards, the tube was opened, and the picture was discovered. When I came to look at it, I was unable to say that it was

actually from Wang Wei's brush; the silk however was extremely fine, and in the snow scene depicted, the white powdery effects on the trees were so beautifully and harmoniously carried out, that it must at any rate have been copied from the original by some Sung dynasty artist. No one of a later age could have done it."

The important position as a painter occupied by Wang Wei, may be further gathered from the following note.

"From the time of the T'ang dynasty, the old style in landscape-painting ceased to prevail. There were in fact two schools, *viz.*, that of Li Ssü-hsün and that of Wang Wei. Li's school was carried on by Sung Chao-po, Chü Po-su, and so on to Li T'ang, Kuo Hsi, Ma Yüan, and Hsia Kuei. Wang's school was carried on by Ching Hao, Kuan T'ung, Tung Yüan, Li Ch'êng, Fan K'uan, and so on to the Elder and Younger Mi, and the four great painters of the Yüan dynasty. Li's school was coarse and hard, with nothing scholarly about it. Wang's school was characterised by a vague harmony and a quiet wildness, a result reached by intellectuality and not by inspiration. As regards Kuo Chung-shu and Ma Ho-chih, these are as it were out-siders, not belonging to the same mess. They form a school of their own."

Another account says, "Painting by men of literary culture began with Wang Wei. He was followed by Tung Yüan, Chü Jan, Li Ch'êng, Fan K'uan, Li Lung-mien, Wang Chin-ch'ing, Mi Nan-kung and [Mi] Hu-êrh, all of whom came in the wake of Tung and Chü. With regard to the four great painters of the Yüan dynasty, Huang Tzû-chin, Wang Shu-ming, Ni Yüan-chên, and Wu Chung-kuei, all these are in the main line of tradition." It is further stated that of the southern school Wang Wei was the first to wash his ground over several times with a thin colour, until it was thoroughly moistened. We may close with the usual legend.

"Wang Wei painted a large rock for one of the Imperial Princes, so naturally that the Prince valued it highly, and would sit alone and gaze at it until he completely lost himself and fancied that he was among the mountains. As years went on, the picture seemed to gain in fineness and colouring, until one day, when there was a great storm of wind, rain, thunder and

lightning, the rock was suddenly torn out of its place and the room wrecked. Subsequently, a blank scroll was discovered, by which it was known that the rock had flown away. During the reign of Hsien Tsung (806—821), a Korean envoy declared that a strange rock had fallen on the sacred Sung mountain, and that, as it bore the signature of Wang Wei, the King dared not keep it, and had accordingly sent to restore it. The Emperor bade his officials compare the signature in question with one known to be Wang Wei's, when it was found that there was absolutely no difference. From that time the Emperor knew that Wang Wei's paintings were inspired, and collected them from all parts of the Empire for the palace."

The *Hsüan ho hua p'u* gives the titles of one hundred and twenty-six of his pictures in the Imperial collection (12th cent.), among which are forty-eight pictures of the Sixteen Lohans, "Shouting for the Ferryboat," "A Snow Mountain," "Catching Fish," "A Fish-Market," "Strange Nations," "Vimalakīrti," "Subhūti," "A Famous Priest," etc.

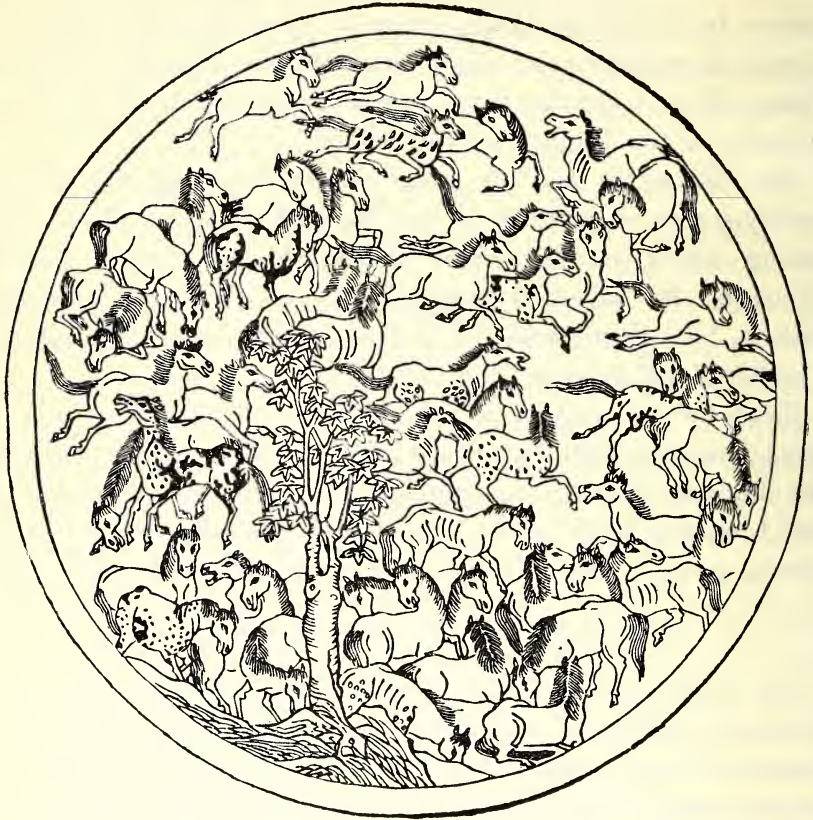
Ts'ao Pa was another of the numerous artists at the Court of Ming Huang, whither he was summoned about A.D. 750 to paint the Imperial horses, and portraits of distinguished officials for the Ling-yen Gallery. He was highly praised in verse by the famous poet Tu Fu, who said in reference to the above portraits,

One touch of thy brush, and the man is alive.

He adds that Ts'ao Pa's horses have "washed away all the horses of antiquity," and that Han Kan, his pupil, "who paints horses in every imaginable form, can only paint the flesh and not the bones," by which he means that the latter fails to bring out the true anatomy of the animal.

Another writer tells us that, "under the T'ang dynasty the painters of horses were many in number; of these there were two who excelled all others, Ts'ao Pa and Han Kan." But neither this statement nor all the eloquence of Tu Fu have been able to keep Ts'ao Pa's name bracketed with that of his great rival. The latter now stands alone at the head of the list, with no second, among those artists who have devoted their genius to the horse.

Han Kan, known to the Japanese as Kan-kan, was born at no great distance from Ch'ang-an, the once famous capital in Shensi, and "in his youth was employed as pot-boy by a neighbouring publican. Before Wang Wei and his brother had made their mark, they often bought liquor on credit, to take with them during their rambles; and when Han Kan went subsequently to their house to dun them for the money, he used to beguile his



"A Hundred Colts"—see p. 58.

From 16th century woodcuts after Han Kan (T'ang dynasty). Even in these poor and distant translations the power and Rubens-like animation of the original can be felt. The treatment of the subject provided an admired model for the early masters of Japan. L. B.

hours of waiting by drawing men and horses on the ground. Wang Wei was so struck by these efforts that he gave Han Kan annually a sum of 20,000 *cash* (say five pounds), and set him to study painting for over ten years."

Elsewhere we read, "Han Kan was a portrait-painter of a high

order, but his forte was horses. At first he studied under Ts'ao Pa, but later on he worked by himself. There was actually a popular rhyme of the day, saying,

Han Kan's horses
Came from Ts'ao Pa's courses.

The Emperor was very fond of large horses, and in his stables he had as many as 40,000 animals, so that he obtained a fine and large breed. From Ferghana in the west he annually received



"A Hundred Colts"—see p. 58.

some as tribute, and these he sent up north to be taught to amble." The writer adds that "in speed they were equal to the wind, and the ground was reflected on their shining coats."

The following story is perhaps the most widely known of all, true and false alike, that have been handed down concerning this painter. "In the middle of the T'ien-pao period (742—756) Han Kan was summoned to Court, and the Emperor bade him

study horse-painting under the guidance of Ch'ên Hung, of whom anon. Later on, his Majesty reproved Han Kan for not having obeyed orders; whereupon the latter replied, Sire, I have teachers of my own. All the horses in the Imperial stables are my teachers,—at which answer the Emperor was much astonished.”

A great many of Han Kan's Buddhist pictures are recorded, Bôdhisatvas, demons, and the like, mostly painted on the walls of temples. He also painted many portraits of eminent Buddhist priests. Among his horse pictures the most remarkable are, “The Emperor trying Horses,” “Horse Physiognomy,” and especially, “A Hundred Colts.” This picture, to judge from the woodcuts which have come down to us, consisted of two discs with fifty animals on each, all in various positions, no two alike, and must have been a very beautiful work. There is also a picture of “Prince Ning training Horses for Polo,” a game which is said to have been introduced some centuries earlier by the Turkish and Tungusic Emperors of China.

Another of his pictures had for its title “Yellow Horse sent as Tribute from Khoten,”—a high-stepping and martial-looking animal.

“In the year 780 a man who was leading a horse enquired where he could find a veterinary surgeon. The latter had no sooner looked at the animal than he exclaimed with a laugh, This looks very much like one of Han Kan's paintings; you never see a real horse like this. Just then Han Kan himself came up, and said in astonishment, Yes, this horse was indeed painted by me; but you know that whatever we do up here is promptly imitated down in the world below. Then, in stroking the horse he found it was slightly lame from an injury to its foreleg; and to his amazement, when he returned to his studio, he found that the horse in his own picture had a little smudge on the same leg. Thus he learnt that pictures place us in communication with the spiritual world.”

“One day a man came to Han Kan's house, and said he was an emissary from the lower regions, and begged the painter to provide him with a horse. Accordingly, Han Kan painted the required picture, and then burnt it. Some days afterwards, this ghostly visitor, riding upon the very horse, came to thank Han

A Boy-Rishi riding on a goat, by HAN KAN.

In the British Museum.

A pictorial vision of one of the Taoist Genii in boyish form riding a monstrous goat on the hills, a bird-cage slung on a plum-branch over his shoulder, while goats and rams of a small terrestrial tribe gambol in delight around. Probably a genuine work of Han Kan, whose famous pictures of horses are represented also here through the rough medium of a 16th century woodcut. The art of the T'ang dynasty, so far as we can ascertain, was marked not only by masculine vigour of drawing but by an interest in action and movement which seems to have died out in later Chinese art, bequeathing its tradition to the great early painters of Japan. Han Kan has been a congenial model for the Japanese; and the vivacity and force of draughtsmanship shown, for instance, in these gambolling goats, inspired them with many a picture.

L. B.



Han Kan.

Kan for his kindness. To such an extent was his influence felt even in the domain of spirits."

"Han Kan had painted a horse pacing, but the silk had been damaged, spoiling one of the animal's feet. 'Tis no matter, said Li Kung-lin; even without this foot, the horse seems to go as well as ever."

"It has been handed down by tradition that whenever he painted a horse, Han Kan paid great attention to the season and the weather (in the picture), and to the angle and position of the animal, before he settled the structural anatomy and the colour of the hair. This was doubtless because the horse is classed under the element *fire* and has its corresponding station in the *south*; so that whether the colour was bluish grey, or black, or dappled, or white, it was always laid on in conformity with cyclical requirements, and with such splendid results. His success was also partly attributable to the fact that he obtained first-class horses as his subjects."

What his contemporaries thought of his art may be seen in the eulogistic lines where Tu Fu, the poet, describes one of his horses as "whiter than driven snow, its hoofs clattering with the thunder of hail, meet steed only for the skilled horseman, a veritable go-between of dragons."

The *Hsüan ho hua p'u* gives the titles of fifty-two of his pictures, all connected with horses and hunting, in the Imperial collection (12th cent.).

Ch'ên Hung was a painter summoned to Court "about the middle of the K'ai-yüan period (A.D. 713—742). He painted the Emperor Ming Huang shooting boars, deer, hares, and wild geese; also very successful portraits, in which he excelled, of his Majesty and his successor on the throne." One critic called him "the foremost artist of the T'ang dynasty since Yen Li-pên." His most famous picture was "The Golden Bridge." It referred to a sacrificial visit paid by the Emperor with a large retinue to the sacred mountain, T'ai, in Shantung, and was painted in collaboration with Wu Tao-tzü and Wei Wu-t'ien. "The Emperor's person, together with the white horse which lighted up the night, and upon which the Emperor rode, were entrusted to Ch'ên Hung. The bridge itself, the scenery, chariots,

men, trees, plants, birds, weapons, and tents, fell to Wu Tao-tzŭ; Wei Wu-t'ien being responsible for the dogs, horses, donkeys, mules, oxen, sheep, camels, monkeys, hares, boars, etc., etc. When the picture was completed, it was called a triple masterpiece."

Wei Yen was "a native of the metropolis, who lived in modern Ssŭch'uan. He was a skilled painter of landscape, bamboos, trees, and human beings. His conceptions were lofty, and his style easy." No dates are given; but the fact that he is mentioned by the poet Tu Fu, as a youth, proves that he must have been born somewhere about A.D. 750. In painting horses, he is said to have been "the peer of Han Kan." His work was extremely fine; often indeed so minute that "a horse's head would be a mere speck, its tail a smudge." On a horse of a larger size "it was possible to count the hairs in its tail." Huang Po-ssŭ, the art-critic, says, "In Ts'ao Pa's pictures of horses, the spirit surpasses the form; in Han Kan's pictures of horses, the form surpasses the spirit; Wei Yen occupies a middle place between these two, the style of his brushwork being very similar."

The pine however was his speciality,—“old pine-trees and quaint rocks.” “The vulgar mob vaguely knew Wei Yen as a painter of horses; they did not know that his pine-trees and his rocks were more beautiful still.” Mi Fei said of one picture, “This pine, with its thousand branches and ten thousand leaves, cannot have been painted in less than a year. The veins on each leaf are like real ones.”

Among his pictures we also have recorded “Foreign Priests from India,” “A Priest fording a Stream,” and “A Colt at Grass.” As a joke upon the Buddhist clergy, he painted at one temple a group of donkeys, which very much irritated the priests, as well it might, the common nickname of a Buddhist priest being “bald-headed ass.” On this picture a later critic writes, “From the poems of Tu Fu we learn that Wei Yen excelled in pines, rocks, human beings, and horses, and that by these he made his name. His other works have now perished, and this is the only testimony to his reputation. Nevertheless from the distant slopes and long banks, from the thick grove of densely-foliaged trees, from the reserve of the artist's power, the scenery itself not being

exhausted to the uttermost,—from all this we can learn what the skill of Wei Yen really was.”

Passing over many minor artists, among whom was one, Wang Tsai, noted for such slowness of execution that the poet Tu Fu said “he took ten days to paint a stream, and five days to paint a boulder,”—we now come to Chang Tsao, an adherent of the southern school of Wang Wei.

Entering into public life under the patronage of the famous Liu Yen (*d.* 780), who had been made Corrector of Texts at the early age of seven, and was popularly known as “the thunderclap of the age,” Chang Tsao got into trouble over salt and iron, two Government monopolies, and was sent into banishment. There he devoted himself more than ever to painting landscape, and also published a small textbook on this department of art.

“Before this banishment, Pi Hung, who had gained for himself a wide reputation as a painter, happened to see some of Chang’s work, and was profoundly impressed by it, especially noticing that he used a bald brush, or that he would smear colour on the silk with his hand. Accordingly, he asked Chang in what school he had been trained; to which the latter replied, Externally I have followed the teachings of Nature, internally the dictates of my own heart. On hearing these words Pi Hung laid down his brush for ever.”

Another writer says, “Chang Tsao used often to come to my house, and so I managed to collect a good many of his works. I once asked him to paint a set of eight landscapes for a screen, and he had actually begun to do so from the scenery around Ch’ang-an when Chu Tz’ü’s rebellion broke out (784), the capital was in an uproar, and Chang fled.” The pictures were of course lost. Another screen, however, appears to have come into the possession of a connoisseur, and “later on, when times were bad with the family, the latter’s wife used the pictures on this screen as lining for some of her clothes.” From this degradation two panels were ultimately rescued, and transferred to the house of a literate.

Further details as to his art and method are provided as follows:—

“Mr. Secretary Chang Tsao was widely known for his position

and learning. His paintings of firs, rocks, and landscapes all had a great vogue; but in firs he took rank with any painter of ancient or modern times. He would grasp two brushes and bring them down simultaneously, with one painting a live, with the other a dead bough. Then from his brushes, vertically and horizontally, with jagged edges or in scaly masses, as his fancy smote him, would burst forth mist and vapour and glowing skies, and the terrors of frost and wind and rain. The living branch would be fresh with the sap of spring, the dead branch would be withered under autumn's blight. In his landscapes were splendid heights and lovely valleys, views close to the spectator's eye or reaching layer behind layer to a great distance. He could paint a cliff about to fall on you, or a spring gushing forth with a roar, which in the foreground would seem to cause a cold shiver, in the background to touch the very confines of the sky."

Under a landscape by Chang Tsao, on the wall of a temple, some one wrote, "Marvels like these are rightly ranked with the divine," there being a slight play on words in "ranked with the divine" (= placed among the gods), which it is difficult to bring out in translation. On another occasion, Chang ornamented a wall by painting on it an old pine-tree, a scholar of the day appended the usual eulogium, and a poet added some verses. Everybody spoke of this as a triple masterpiece; but the old cynic to whom the house belonged was very angry, and asked Chang what he meant by thus gratuitously "giving his wall the itch."

Liu Shang took the highest degree, and became a Secretary in one of the Six Boards. He was very fond of Taoism and the black art, and went into retirement as a hermit, which probably gave currency to the story that he had joined the Immortals. "He was a great lover of fine scenery; and in the intervals of literary pursuits he practised landscape-drawing to such purpose that connoisseurs would come from long distances and ask him to paint on pieces of white silk, which they brought with them, a pine-tree, a rock, a cloud-effect, or a solitary crane. Those who obtained such pictures valued them beyond all gold and gems."

Another authority says that Liu Shang studied at first under Chang Tsao, and afterwards took to portrait-painting. Chang's

banishment affected Liu deeply, and caused him to write the following lines,

The lichen grows thick on the stones in the brook,
 And the breeze stirs the leaves of the pines by the shore
 Ah! Chang Tsao alone could interpret this book,
 But now he is gone and we see him no more.

The most remarkable point recorded in connection with this artist must be told as nearly as possible in the exact words of the Chinese text. "Liu Shang painted a picture called *Looking on at Wei-ch'i* (a game). This was cut on stone, and was put into circulation."

In A.D. 789, an edict was issued for the formation of a gallery to contain the portraits of all the heroes of the dynasty, from Ch'u Sui-liang, 596—658, down to Li Shêng, 727—793. Twenty-seven portraits were produced, and were hung in the Ling-yen Pavilion, which was afterwards made the subject of a panegyric by a poet named Ts'ui Sun.

Chang Su-ch'ing was a Taoist priest, who was living among the mountains in A.D. 780. He has a long string of pictures attached to his name, illustrating personages and incidents connected with the Taoist religion, such as "Lao Tzŭ crossing the Quicksands," *i. e.*, the Desert of Gobi, on his supposed flight to the West. His greatest work was a picture of the Five Sacred Mountains and the Four Great Rivers of China, with various branches and tributaries of the latter, and numerous water-gods and tree-gods and ghostly attendants, the whole producing such a wonderful effect that "it struck terror into the hearts of all beholders."

"Among men of high literary culture," says one desultory writer, "those who have no artistic perceptions will be few; and among men of no literary culture, those who have artistic perceptions will also be few."

Han Yü, A.D. 768—824, commonly known as the Prince of Literature, seems to have been an exception to the rule that great literary men are always more or less artists. He has however left us a curious description of a picture, which, as will be seen, was actually in his own possession. This work, the size of which he says vaguely was "small," contained no fewer than 123 human

figures employed in 32 different ways, such as putting on or preparing arms and armour, riding, leading horses or oxen, carrying, resting, sleeping, eating, looking on (women), playing (children), etc., etc. There were 83 horses employed in 27 different ways, such as eating, drinking, neighing, kicking, biting, carrying, scratching themselves against trees, etc., etc. There were 30 animals, such as camels, donkeys, dogs, sheep, foxes, hares, deer, etc., etc.; three chariots, and 251 different articles, such as weapons, clothes, hats, basins, hatchets, pots, kettles, chessmen, etc., etc. All these were painted with extraordinary skill, and in no instance were there any duplicates.

"It was in the year 794," says Han Yü, "when I happened to be at the capital without much to do, that I first saw this picture, then owned by a fellow-lodger. Playing one day with him at squails, he staked this picture, and I had the good fortune to win it. I thought a great deal of it, for I could not believe it was the work of a single man, uniting as it did in itself such a variety of excellencies; and no sum would have tempted me to part with it. Next year I left the city, and went to Ho-yang; and there one day, while discussing art with several strangers, I produced the picture for them to see. Among them was a Mr. Chao, a Censor, a highly cultivated man, who when he saw it seemed rather overcome, and at length said, That picture is a copy, made by me in my youth, when I gave much attention to art, of a work from the Imperial gallery. I lost it twenty years ago when travelling in the province of Fuhkien." The story ends by Han Yü presenting the picture to Mr. Chao, and keeping a note of its details to enable him to recall the scene. These details may seem startling to some, but they will be readily and unreservedly accepted by any one who is acquainted with the life and writings of Han Yü, one of the greatest and purest spirits that have ever adorned any country.

The portrait which is generally accepted in China as that of Han Yü, the eminent statesman and poet of the T'ang dynasty, who had a fat face and scanty beard, is really that of Han Hsi-tsai, another statesman, who lived somewhat later and possessed a fine flowing beard.

Tuan Ch'êng-shih, who died in A.D. 863, mentions in his well-

known antiquarian work that "the eyes of the Buddhist priests and supernatural beings painted on the walls of temples followed the spectator around, the pupils being always put in with the greatest accuracy."

Chou Fang flourished as an artist under the Emperor Tê Tsung, A.D. 780—805. His elder brother had accompanied Ko-shu Han on his victorious campaign against the Turfan, when the Chinese army captured the "Stone Fortress," the *λίθινος πύργος* of Marianus of Tyre and of Ptolemy, recently identified by Dr. Stein. On his return, he was able to put in a good word for his younger brother, and the latter was summoned to Court, and ordered to execute a painting of a religious subject in a temple which the Emperor had just restored. "No sooner had he begun to paint than the people of the capital flocked in to watch him, fools and wise alike, some pointing out the beauties of his work, and others drawing attention to its shortcomings. He made changes accordingly, and by the end of a month or so there was not a dissentient voice to be heard, everybody uniting in praise of the painting, and declaring it to be the masterpiece of the day."

Among his other great pictures may be mentioned "Moonlight on the Water," "The Goddess of Mercy," "Vaisravana" (whose features were revealed to him in a dream), and also a portrait of Chao Tsung, son-in-law to the great general Kuo Tzŭ-i. A previous portrait of him had been executed by Han Kan, and the old father-in-law "had the two placed side by side for comparison, but could not decide between them. When his daughter came to see him, he said, Who are these? Those are the Secretary, she replied. Which portrait is most like? he continued. They are both very like, she said, but the later one is the better picture. What do you mean by that? he asked. The earlier portrait is the Secretary so far as form and features go, answered his daughter; the later artist has caught in addition the very soul of the man, who seems to be laughing and talking before us."

The *Hsüan ho hua p'u* enumerates the titles of seventy-two of his pictures in the Imperial collection (12th cent.).

In the very early years of the 9th century, according to one authority, there appeared certain men from the Hsin-lo nation,

who "bought up at a high price several tens of Chou Fang's pictures, and carried them away to their own country." This entry is of some importance, Hsin-lo being an old kingdom in the south-west of Korea, from which country Japan is said to have received her first lessons in Chinese art. Huang Po-ssü, the art-critic, points out that Chou Fang made his name first of all by Buddhistic pictures, and that later on his Taoist pictures were among the finest of his day. "But now," he adds, "we see nothing save his men and girls, which is very much a matter for regret."

Following Chou Fang come a large number of minor painters, such as Ch'êng Hsiu-chi, whose grandfather was a famous physician, and who painted various diseases, chiefly, we are told, with a view to make known the remedies for them, not as an advertisement, but with a purely charitable object. He was also employed by the Emperor to repaint the dresses, hats, plants, trees, birds, animals, etc., mentioned in the *Odes*, as the work done by Wei Hsieh in that line had begun to fade away.

There is also Tai Sung, who excelled in painting oxen. Two of his pictures are specially mentioned; one in which a herdboy is seen reflected in a cow's eyes, while the cow is similarly seen in the boy's eyes; another, in which the nose and lips of a cow drinking are joined to the nose and lips of the animal's reflected form as seen on the surface of the water.

Su Tung-p'ò, 1036—1101, tells the following story.

"In Ssüch'uan there lived a retired scholar, named Tu. He was very fond of calligraphy and painting, and possessed a large and valuable collection. Among the rest was a painting of oxen by Tai Sung, which he regarded as exceptionally precious, and kept in an embroidered case on a jade-mounted roller. One day he put his treasures out to sun, and it chanced that a herdboy saw them. Clapping his hands and laughing loudly, the herdboy shouted out, Look at the bulls fighting! Bulls trust to their horns, and keep their tails between their legs, but here they are fighting with their tails cocked up in the air; that's wrong! Mr. Tu smiled, and acknowledged the justice of the criticism. So truly does the old saying run: For ploughing, go to a ploughman; for weaving, to a servant-maid." This pig-with-its-

feet-in-the-trough story is elsewhere told with somewhat different detail.

Then Pien Luan, painter of birds and flowers, is perhaps worthy of a brief note for his splendid "A Peacock," eulogised by Hu Yen of the Ming dynasty some five hundred years later. It appears that between 785 and 806 the King of the Hsin-lo (in Korea) forwarded as tribute a dancing peacock, and the Emperor was so pleased that he commissioned Pien Luan to paint two pictures of it, a front and a back view. This he achieved to such purpose that "the plumage of dazzling gold seemed to tinkle faintly" with the movements of the bird.

Chin Chung-i, though no doubt a minor painter, forms an important landmark in connection with Japanese art from the fact that he was a Korean, who appears to have brought his skill in painting with him from his native kingdom of Hsin-lo, and did not acquire it in China. In fact he is said to have obtained thereby an important official post; but he was not a success with his colleagues, and was finally cashiered for "soiling the Court records." We are told nothing about his work, except that it was "exceedingly skilful."

Li Chien, known to the Japanese as Ri-zen, "was famous for his pictures of barbarian men and horses, horse-archery, shooting eagles, herding oxen, and for his water pieces, which were very delicately harmonised, without compare in ancient or modern times." Another writer says, "For tigers, there is Li Chien of the T'ang dynasty." His son Li Chung-ho, known to the Japanese as Ri-chiū-wa, also "painted barbarian horses and men. He inherited the afflatus of his father, but not the latter's vigour of brush."

Hsiao Yüeh devoted himself to the bamboo, and to only one variety. He was very chary of parting with his pictures, and it sometimes took a year to get a single stalk out of him. However, he once presented the poet Po Chü-i with no fewer than fifteen stalks, and drew from him the following eulogy:

Of all plants the bamboo is the hardest to draw;
In ancient and modern times many have tried, but none have succeeded.
The brush of Hsiao Yüeh alone has achieved resemblance
Since painting began he is the one and only man.

Tso Ch'üan was a prolific painter of Buddhist subjects, who in A.D. 826 attracted the attention of the Court. Among his more famous pictures were "Vimalakīrti," "The King of Ceylon," "Manjusri," "Avalōkitēśvara with the Thousand Hands and Eyes," besides portraits of the Twenty-eight Patriarchs of Buddhism, of the Sixteen Lohans, and of Bôdhisatvas without end.

When the poet Po Chü-i was old and suffering from rheumatism, he commissioned Tu Tsung-ching, a painter of the day, to paint a picture of the Buddhist Paradise as described in certain sūtras. The picture was nine feet in height by thirteen in breadth, and contained Maitrēya Buddha sitting in the middle, with Avalōkitēśvara and Shih Chih (both here regarded as males) one on each side, and also a crowd of female musicians, trees, flowers, the seven jewels (*sapta ratna*), etc., in the background.

Fan Ch'ung was another well-known religious painter, "whose brush, between 847 and 874, was never at rest." He painted over two hundred frescos, including many Kings of the Dêvas, Buddhas, Bôdhisatvas, and others, no two of which were alike. In 826 he had already painted an Avalōkitēśvara, not quite a foot in height, says Li Chih (11th and 12th cent.), with thirty-six arms, each of which was well drawn, and fitted properly to the body and grasped with the fingers some distinctive object. The brush-strokes, we are told, looked like threads.

In A.D. 814 a magician, named Wang Ch'ung, who was present at a social gathering, "bade one of the guests pick out a tile, and on this he painted a tortoise. Then placing the tile in his robe for a short time, he drew it forth a living tortoise, which on being set down ran about the courtyard; but next morning it was a tile again."

In 828 the Emperor caused to be painted a series of pictures, each portraying some national episode in which sovereign and minister were concerned. These were painted on the walls of the T'ai-yeh kiosque, and "his Majesty gazed at them morning and night."

Hsiang Chu was another minor artist who flourished about the middle of the 9th century. He painted a picture of some anglers, a mountain stream, etc., which happened to be seen by

a wild erratic scholar named Fang Kan. The latter wrote underneath the picture,

In a pine-tree and boulder the same art is found,
But to paint a cascade you must needs paint the sound.
That genius will carry you far is most true,
Yet, believe me, there must be the drudgery too.

Mi Fei, the painter and critic of the 11th century, pronounced a certain picture to be a copy by Tu Mu, the poet, A.D. 803—852, of the "Vimalarkīrti" by Ku K'ai-chih, who flourished four hundred years before. Unfortunately, however, the statement has been hotly disputed by later critics, and can only be received with caution.

In 881 rebellion caused the reigning Emperor to flee to Ssüch'uan. When about to return to the capital, he was petitioned to leave behind in a temple "a portrait of his Imperial Countenance." Now the Court painters who had accompanied his Majesty upon his flight, "were all mere brush-holders, incapable of expressing the Divine Features." This gave the required opportunity to a young man, named Ch'ang Chung-yin, who handed in a portrait at which "all the Court officials were astounded, declaring that the painter must be a re-incarnation of Chang Sêng-yu of old." Ch'ang subsequently became one of the leading artists of the day; and the poet-painter-priest, Kuan Hsiu, pronounced the following panegyric on his work: "This poor monk (himself) has seen many pictures; but never has there been, and never will there be, an artist to paint pictures like these."

Sun Wei was "by nature wild and light-hearted, and although he loved wine, never got dead drunk. He was very intimate with Buddhist and Taoist priests. If people of wealth and position invited him, and committed the slightest breach of etiquette in their treatment of him, even a thousand ounces of silver would not extract from him a single stroke of his brush." Among his frescos, chiefly religious, may be mentioned one of Dhritarâshtra, the Heavenly King who guards the world on the east.

Su Tung-p'o refers to him thus. "Water has usually been painted, in both ancient and modern times, as flat, far-reaching, and slightly ruffled. Even those who succeeded best, could only

rise to crested waves, which caused people to pass the hand across what seemed to be skilfully produced hollows and projections. In point of style it was really no better than the water seen in print from wooden blocks. However, in A.D. 880 a retired scholar, named Sun Wei, took up a new line, and painted torrents rushing in sinuous courses, curling around boulders, and adapting themselves to the shapes of things, with all the manifold variety of water." In this, the writer goes on to say, he was followed later on by Huang Ch'üan and Sun Chi-wei (*qq. v.*).

Chang Nan-pên is especially noticeable for his mastery over fire, just as Sun Wei had been a skilful painter of water, "neither of which elements," says a critic, "has a uniform presentment." In the great hall of a Buddhist temple Chang had painted a fresco of "The Eight Glorious Kings." "A wandering priest arrived at the temple, and after arranging his clothes, was ascending the hall, when his eye lighted upon the fierce flames glowing and roaring on the wall. The stranger was so overcome with fear at the sight that he nearly swooned away." Among Chang's best pictures were "A Korean King at Worship," "A Portrait of Mayūrarāja," the Peacock King, "A Poetical Party," "Book Collation," and a "Pratyēka Buddha," in which he is said to have "grasped the nature of fire."

Ku Shêng, a landscape-painter of this period, has received more notice than he was perhaps entitled to, chiefly because of his strange method. "He began by spreading out his silk upon the ground, and mixing his colours. Meanwhile he caused a number of men to blow horns, beat drums, and make a general hubbub; in the midst of which he would put on an embroidered robe, and with an embroidered turban around his head, would drink himself half-tipsy. He would then sketch in the outline of his picture, and proceed to lay on the colours with a big brush, mountain peaks and island shapes starting into existence in a very wonderful manner."

With the Buddhist priest Hui, who "painted dragons, regardless of their horns and scales, aiming only at muscle and bone and vitality," this chapter on the T'ang dynasty must be brought to a close.

The twentieth and last Emperor of this great house abdicated

in 907, and for the next sixty years the Empire was in a state of political disintegration and unrest. There does not appear, however, to have been much falling off in the number of painters who came forward, while at least one of their number stands among the first of the first.

Several very important works on painting were produced under the T'ang dynasty, extracts from which have been used in the preceding chapters. The *Hua shih* of P'ei Hsiao-yüan gives a list of fifty-five artists and the titles of two hundred and sixty-two pictures, eleven of the latter being of doubtful attribution. The names of forty-seven temples are also mentioned as containing frescos by eminent painters.

The *Ming hu lu*, by Chu Ching-yüan, deals with ninety-eight painters and the particular lines in which each excelled. The names are arranged under four classes, as Inspired, Wonderful, Talented, and Pleasing. Each of these classes is sub-divided into Upper, Middle, and Lower. In the Upper-Inspired class, Wu Tao-tzŭ stands alone; in the Middle-Inspired, Chou Fang; while in the Lower-Inspired we have Yen Li-pên, Yen Li-tê, Wei-ch'ih I-sêng, Chang Tsao, Han Kan, Li Ssŭ-hsün, and Hsieh Chi. The great Wang Wei is placed third in the Upper-Wonderful class, Wei Wu-t'ien being first, and Chu Shên, who is not included here, second.

The *Li tai ming hua chi*, by Chang Yen-yüan, has a list of three hundred and seventy artists, four of whom belong to legendary times, six to the first and second centuries before Christ, and six more to the first and second centuries after Christ. The names are arranged chronologically, and extend to the year A.D. 841. In this work we are told that "painters contribute to the civilisation of man, exhibit the various manifestations of spiritual beings, and probe the mysterious and the infinitesimal." We also learn how during the reign of terror, A.D. 190—192, Tung Cho's soldiers used the pictures of the Imperial collection, which were then all of silk, for bags and like purposes; and how, out of some seventy pictures which were saved, quite half were destroyed by rain. Further, how under the Wei and Chin dynasties the Tartars sacked Lo-yang, the capital, and burned all they could lay their hands on. The

result was that at the beginning of the T'ang dynasty there were not many more than three hundred pictures in the Imperial treasury. Other interesting portions of this book are articles on landscape-drawing, on the market-value of pictures, and on the art of collecting. We learn that "a screen by Tung Po-jen, Chan Tzŭ-ch'ien, Yang Tzŭ-hua, Yen Li-pên, or Wu Tao-tzŭ, would fetch as much as twenty thousand ounces of silver, while productions of an inferior class would fetch fifteen thousand;" also, that prices depend on many arbitrary considerations, and that it is really impossible to speak of the "value" of a picture. "Good pictures are more priceless than gold or jade; bad ones are not worth a potsherd." "Some collectors are not connoisseurs; or if they are, they do not understand how to enjoy pictures; and even if they do so understand, they often do not know how to take care of their treasures." There is also an important passage in which the writer says that down to the end of the Sui dynasty there were no prints of the pictures which had belonged to the Imperial collections of former times, implying that under the T'ang dynasty pictures were first cut on blocks and printed for circulation. The application of printing to books did not come into vogue until later, the Classics being first printed in 930. Then we have specimens of the seals used by Emperors and private persons to stamp the pictures in their possession, followed by a long list of the frescos in the two ancient capitals, Lo-yang and Ch'ang-an, and of exceptionally valuable pictures, scattered far and wide in private collections, which had belonged to Imperial galleries under earlier dynasties. Among the last are "Pictures of Men of all Nations," "Tribute-Bearers," showing a foreign chieftain offering a variety of articles for acceptance by the Emperor, and "A Map of Central India," with a record of the journey of some traveller whose name is not given.

CHAPTER IV

A. D. 900—960

The Five Dynasties

The artists to be mentioned in this chapter, chosen from a group of about two hundred in all, belong to the first sixty years of the 10th century, the period between the fall of the T'ang dynasty and the rise of the "glorious" House of Sung. Within those dates no fewer than five small dynasties succeeded one another, and there were in addition several independent States.

Ching Hao was a landscape-painter who worked for his own amusement, and wrote a small treatise on the art. He said that "Wu Tao-tzŭ, in painting landscape, had the brush, but not the paint; Hsiang Jung had the paint, but not the brush. I adopt the strong points of each of them, and form a school of my own." Kuan T'ung became his pupil, and "in his eager desire to excel the master, forgot to eat and sleep. The result was that people said, Kuan T'ung's landscapes are of man," meaning that they were artificial, not inspired. Mi Fei, the critic, declared that he was a disciple of Pi Hung, and that "his trees had branches but no trunks." On the other hand it was said that "he could paint a picture by a single stroke of his brush;" also that "the less he used his brush, the more strength he gave to his pictures; the more sparing he was of accessories, the more profound would be his thought."

The *Hsüan ho hua p'u* mentions ninety-four of Kuan T'ung's pictures as being in the Imperial collection (12th cent.), every single one of which is a landscape.

Li Ai-chih "was an artist of hill and dale and rock and stream,

but his speciality was cats." Then follow two painters famous for their pictures of the Sixteen Lohans. One of them indeed painted nothing else, and was nicknamed in consequence Li Lo-han.

Li Kuei-chên was a Taoist priest, of a dissipated character and given to frequent taverns, but "good at oxen, tigers, falcons, birds generally, and the bamboo." "When any one asked him to explain his conduct, he opened his mouth wide and sucked his fist, without saying a word. The Emperor summoned him to Court, and likewise questioned him; to which Li replied, My robe is thin, and I like wine. I take wine to keep me warm, and I paint pictures to pay for the wine."

Wandering away to Nan-ch'ang in Kiangsi, Li came to a Taoist temple where there was a beautiful image of Chia-shu, one of the Three Officials, which had been modelled in the days of the Emperor Ming Huang of the T'ang dynasty (some two hundred years before). It was being much spoilt by pigeons and sparrows; so Li painted alongside of it the picture of a hawk, after which no bird would settle on it.

Little is known of Li Chu, except that he painted over 200 frescos, and among others portraits of Kashiapmadanga and Gobharana, each eight feet in height, besides ten Buddhist deities, each twenty feet in height. So too Tso Li painted the twenty-four transformations of Buddha, the Sixteen Lohans, as well as the Three Officials and Ten Perfect Beings of Taoism. These two religions had already learnt to flourish in peace side by side, as they do at the present day.

Li Tsan-hua was a Kitan Tartar, younger brother of the "Prince of Heaven," from which he was nicknamed the "Prince of Man." He came to China in 931 and swore allegiance, whereupon the Emperor bestowed upon him the name by which he is known. He painted subjects drawn from his own country, especially excelling in horses. He had been for some time previously well known as a painter; for although nothing was allowed to pass the northern frontier except on payment of heavy duties, many of his pictures had already found their way into China. Fifteen are mentioned in the *Hsüan ho hua p'u* as being in the Imperial collection, among which were "Riding Double," "A Ride in the Snow," "Barbarians on Horseback," "Nü-chên Tartars

Hunting," "A Thousand-horned Deer," etc. Another Kitan, named Hu Huan, is noted for having his brushes made of wolf's hair, which was set in a peculiar way suitable for drawing the manes and tails of horses. The *Hsüan ho hua p'u* gives the titles of sixty-five of his pictures in the Imperial collection (12th cent.), among which are "Archery on Horseback," "Tending Horses," "Falconry," etc.

Li Yüan-ying, also known for his horses, painted a picture of "A Tartar Festivity," and, what is still more interesting, a picture entitled "Fu-lin" (see *Ka-fu-t'o*).

A Buddhist priest, named Chih-hui (Wisdom Luminous), is mentioned as having been equally skilful at fine work and at painting frescos. "When elevated by wine," says his biographer, "he held the clouds and the hills in the hollow of his hand."

The next artist of interest is a woman. "The Lady Li, an accomplished poet and painter, was carried off in a raid on her native State, the modern Ssüch'uan, by Kuo Ch'ung-t'ao. Loathing her warlike captor, she sat miserably day after day alone in her pavilion. One moonlight night, when the rustling bamboos threw flickering shadows, she started up, and dipping her brush, painted them on the paper-covered windows. Next day she looked at her bamboos, and saw that she had caught them to the life; and very soon others began to imitate her style."

The Southern T'ang State was founded in 936, and of its painters thirty-one names have been recorded.

Hsü Hsi, a Government official, was "famous for his flowers, bamboos, trees, cicadas, butterflies, etc. He used to frequent kitchen-gardens in search of subjects; but although his pictures contain cabbages and such vegetables, in expression he passes beyond the limitations of the old masters." He was also a fine colourist, and could impart life to his work. One of his great works was a picture of the Parthian tree (pomegranate), covered with more than a hundred of the fruit. Another was "Peonies in a Wind," consisting of "a cluster of several thousand leaves and only three flowers; one flower straight in front, a second on the right-hand side, and the third quite behind a dense mass of leaves." "For flowers, Hsü Hsi generally used a fine transparent paper; when he painted on silk, he used a rather coarse-

ribbed kind." A critic says, "In painting flowers, people ordinarily aim at strict resemblance; but not so Hsü Hsi. And the painter who can ignore such resemblance, becomes what Ssü-ma Ch'ien was among prose writers and Tu Fu among poets,"—an artist of the very front rank.

The *Hsüan ho hua p'u* gives the titles of two hundred and forty-nine of his pictures in the Imperial collection (12th cent.), all of birds, flowers, fruit, and fishes.

Chou Wên-chü was an artist of considerable repute, one of his pictures being bought by the ruler of the Southern T'ang State, and forwarded to the Imperial gallery. His speciality was women, whose faces he painted after the style of Chou Fang, their dresses being treated according to a particular method of his own. "The difficulty with women," says a critic, "lies in their characteristic poses. Chou Fang and Chang Hsüan of the T'ang dynasty, Tu Hsiao and Chou Wên-chü of the Five Dynasty Period, and later on Su Han-ch'ên, all managed to seize these to perfection. Success is not attained by rouge and powder, nor by ornaments of gold and jade. I remember seeing 'A Palace Lady' by Chou Wên-chü. She had stuck her jade flute into her girdle, and was looking at her nails, all the while in a deep reverie. You could see that she was thinking. Then again there was Chou's picture of 'A Buddhist Priest Trying his Brush,' the property of a private family in Chehkiang. The priest with bared arm was manoeuvring the brush, while around stood a number of literati eagerly approving the work. You could positively hear them speak. It was indeed a marvellous picture."

Mei Hsing-ssü was known for his skilful treatment of the barndoor fowl, with which his name came to be associated as a household word. "Its drinkings, and peckings, and loiterings, the attitudes of cock and hen, the ramblings of the brood, calls to food, etc., were all cleverly portrayed." But perhaps his greatest success was achieved with the fighting cock,—“its method of tackling the enemy: advancing with dignity, trembling with excitement while waiting for the attack, feathers ruffled and neck swelling, exactly as if alive.”

The merits of Ku Tê-ch'ien seem to have been somewhat overestimated at times. One critic declared that in certain

departments "he was the peer of Wang Wei;" and the ruler of the Southern T'ang State said, "Of old there was Ku K'ai-chih; now we have Ku Tê-ch'ien." Among other subjects he painted cows, and there was a picture of his preserved at Sung-kiang, called "Milch Cows," consisting of three cows, two calves, and a herdboy.

Yang Hui was a painter of fishes. "He paid no attention to detail, but devoted himself to their movements on rising to breathe, and when darting hither and thither. He also painted water-plants, duckweed and the like, producing the veritable scenery of autumn in a most delightful manner."

Chieh Ch'u-chung "painted snow-laden bamboos, which conveyed the idea of cold. Among them he would place birds, either in groups or singly, looking as if they were shivered to death." This is the "chilly capacity" which G. F. Stephenson found in Landseer's "Flood in the Highlands."

Kao Tao-hsing of the Earlier Shu State painted a variety of subjects, and one enthusiast said of him that "whatever he touched, he beautified." Hence arose a popular saying, "If Kao drops his brush, the result is a picture."

Li Shêng, also of Ch'êng-tu in modern Ssüch'uan, began to paint in early youth, following no particular school. He obtained a landscape by Chang Tsao, but after studying it for several days, threw it aside, saying, "This is not perfection." He then started painting the scenery of his native State, "making Nature his master, as former great artists had done; and in a few years he had founded a new and admirable school of landscape." Among his best-known pictures were, "The Peach-blossom Fountain," an allegorical subject referring to the peach-blossom days of youth; "Mount Omi," from the summit of which is seen the "glory" of Buddha; "The Three Gorges," on the upper waters of the Yangtsze, besides other famous hills and streams. "Connoisseurs who got hold of his works, regarded them as jewels to be kept locked up." He is said by some to have resembled in style Li Ssü-hsün of the T'ang dynasty; hence he acquired the sobriquet of "General Li the Younger." Another critic warns us that his pictures have often been wrongly attributed to Wang Wei.

Kuan Hsiu was a Buddhist priest, "whose name in the world had been Chiang." In 936 he went to the Shu State, and was

received with high honour as a calligraphist and painter, every one hastening to greet him with a piece of white silk, on which he was expected to paint something. "Taking Yen Li-pên as his model, he produced the Sixteen Lohans, with their bushy eyebrows and big eyes, with their drooping cheeks and aquiline noses, leaning against pine-trees or rocks, sitting amidst flood and fell, with their Tartar faces and Indian countenances, rendering to perfection the distinctive bearing of each. To some one who asked him, he replied that these Lohans had been revealed to him in a vision. He also painted the Ten Disciples of Buddha, in a similar style to the above, and all men marvelled thereat." Woodcuts of the above have been handed down. No fewer than thirty of his pictures are mentioned in the *Hsüan ha hua p'u* (12th century) as part of the Imperial collection; namely, "portraits of Vimalakîrti," of "Subhüti," of "A Famous Priest," of "A Famous Indian Priest," and twenty-six pictures of the Lohans.

Chao Chung-i was the son of a painter who had formed his own style on some hundred and more works by artists of the Sui and T'ang dynasties which had come into his possession. After studying some time with his father, Chao joined the latter in painting thirteen walls for a temple; and it was said that "the halls, kiosques, hills, water, bamboos, trees, barbarian and Chinese dresses and ornaments, Buddhas, priests, chariots, horses, goblins, angels, ceremonial caps of nobles, banners, and religious paraphernalia, were all executed in a masterly manner." Consequently, "the ruler of the Shu State commissioned Chao Chung-i to paint a picture of the building of the Jade Temple by General Kuan; and the painter, beginning with the carting of material and the laying of foundations, proceeded systematically to the crimson beams and carved joists, and to the rafters supporting the eaves, carrying out his task in a truly supernatural manner. When the picture was completed, the ruler of Shu bade all the Court officials come and see if the structure was accurately painted or not; and he was told in reply that if placed alongside the real building, the picture would lose nothing by the comparison. The artist was then loaded with favours, and admitted to the Hanlin College.

"Now it had been an annual custom for members of the Hanlin

who could paint supernatural beings, to hand in towards the New Year pictures of Chung K'uei (the queller of demons); and in 956 Chao offered a representation of the magician gouging out a demon's eye with his forefinger. A contemporary artist, P'u Shih-hsün, offered a picture precisely similar in every respect, except that Chung K'uei was gouging out the eye with his thumb. The ruler of Shu enquired from Huang Ch'üan which was the better of the two works, and this great artist, to whom we shall shortly be coming, was rather in favour of P'u's picture. His Highness, however, observed that with regard to the finger and thumb employed, each artist had shown equal strength with his rival, and that as it was difficult to decide between them, both would be handsomely rewarded." The meaning is that P'u's was the better, Chao's the more correct painting; for in the classical picture by Wu Tao-tzŭ the forefinger had been used, as will presently be seen under Huang Ch'üan.

P'u Shih-hsün was employed about 954 in painting frescos at a great many temples, he being especially good at religious subjects and barbarian horses. One night the ruler of Shu dreamt that "a man with a tattered hat, an ancient robe, bushy eyebrows, large eyes, a square jaw, and a massive forehead, appeared before him with a limping foot which he begged might be healed. Next day, his Highness came across an old picture of this very personage, the left foot of which had been perforated and torn. P'u was ordered to examine it, and found that it was a picture of the God of Fevers, by Wu Tao-tzŭ; and accordingly it was carefully restored. Later on, the god again appeared in a dream, and thanked his Highness for saving his foot."

Yüan Chih-hui and Yüan Wei-tê were father and son, both of them distinguished for their skill in painting women. The former was more of a portrait-painter, and produced likenesses of several of the Princesses. The latter excelled rather in Palace scenes, and among his recorded pictures we find, "Young Bucks at a Banquet," "Spring in the Seraglio," "Swinging in the Palace Grounds," "Palace Flat-irons (?)," "Dancing in the Palace," "A Palace Concert," "in all of which," says one writer, "were portrayed the very buildings, gardens, and trees of the Palace, as well as the actual doings and surroundings of the Court ladies themselves."

Huang Ch'üan, known to the Japanese as Wō-sen, made for himself a great position in the history of Chinese art. He was a native of Ch'êng-tu, the capital of modern Ssüch'uan, and held high office under the last ruler of the Shu State. "As a child, he showed a passion for drawing; and as he grew up, he developed extraordinary talent. When Tiao Kuang-yin—an artist whose brush never stopped for thirty years, save when he was ill—settled in Ssüch'uan (936), Huang took lessons from him in the bamboo, rocks, flowers, and birds. He also studied dragons, water, pine-trees, and rocks, under Sun Wei, and landscape, bamboos, and trees, under Li Shêng, excelling in every particular."

"In 944 some presents were sent to the ruler of Shu, and among others several live cranes. His Highness commanded Huang to paint these birds on a wall in the Palace; and there they appeared, the Signal-giver, the Lichen-pecker, the Down-smoother, the Feather-preener, the Sky-screamer, and the Leg-raiser, every detail of hue and of bearing brought out even more vividly than in real life, so that often living cranes were attracted by the resemblance." His Highness was much pleased, and of course the painter was handsomely rewarded.

"Now hitherto the people of Ssüch'uan had never seen live cranes, and had regarded the pictures of them by Hsieh Chi as perfect marvels. From the date of Huang's paintings, however, Hsieh's reputation began to decline, and with it the market value of his works." Tu Fu, the poet, said "Hsieh Chi painted eleven cranes, all exactly like cranes, but also exactly like one another."

"In 953 Huang was instructed to paint the four walls of a new hall in the Palace to represent the four seasons, with the appropriate flowers, bamboos, hares, pheasants, and other birds, belonging to each. It happened that at the close of the same year some envoys from foreign nations arrived, and gave a military exhibition in this very hall. Among their tribute offerings were some white falcons, which mistook the pheasants on the wall for live birds, and promptly attacked them."

Of Huang Ch'üan's great pictures may be mentioned, "Spring on the Mountains," "Autumn on the Mountains," "Evening on the Mountains," "Morning on the Mountains," and "Rain on the Mountains."

The *Hsüan ho hua p'u* gives the titles of three hundred and forty-nine of Huang Ch'üan's pictures, mostly of birds and flowers, in the Imperial collection (12th cent.). Others are "The Three Pure Ones" (the Taoist Trinity), "Kuan Yin," "Cat and Kittens Playing," "Cat Eating Fish," "Cat and Dog," "The God of Longevity," "Buddha," and a number of landscapes.

There is a story that the ruler of Shu showed Huang Ch'üan a "Chung K'uei" by Wu Tao-tzŭ, in which the magician was gouging out the demon's eye with the forefinger of his right hand, and said that he was to change to the thumb, which would give more strength. Huang, however, painted a totally new picture, substituting the thumb as desired; whereupon the ruler of Shu asked him why he had disobeyed orders. "Sire," replied Huang, "in Wu Tao-tzŭ's picture the eyes and the thoughts of Chung K'uei are focussed on the forefinger; in my picture they are focussed on the thumb." His Highness saw the point at once, and rejoiced that he had so careful an artist.

The mantle of Huang Ch'üan fell upon his son, Huang Chü-ts'ai, who is said to have collaborated with his father in several of the latter's most famous pictures. "In painting flowers, the bamboo, feathers, and fur, he reached the reality of Nature; and in drawing weird rocks and mountain scenery, he often left his father far behind." The *Hsüan ho hua p'u* gives the titles of three hundred and thirty-two of his pictures in the Imperial collection, all of birds and flowers.

During a portion of the period included under the artists already dealt with, *i. e.* from 915, the Kitan Tartars (Liao dynasty) had been ruling over Southern China; and they continued their sway until 1115, when they were finally overthrown by the Nü-chên Tartars (Chin dynasty). In these two hundred years only five painters of genuine Tartar stock seem to have come to the front; although in southern China, where the House of Sung prevailed, the names of artists became almost legion. Of these five, two are perhaps worthy of mention.

Yeh-lü T'ü-tzŭ, a scion of the Imperial family, was a soldier as well as a painter, and spent most of his life in fighting against the Sungs, being present at the defeat of Ho Ling-t'u in 985. He appears to have been a painter of battles; and on one

occasion, when the Sung general was lying mortally wounded, he jumped off his horse and painted a picture of the scene, "as a warning to the Sung."

How fearfully he stifles that short moan!
 Gods! if I could but paint a dying groan!

Yeh-lü Niao-li was a young man of brilliant parts, and an enthusiastic painter. He got into trouble as an official, and was condemned to death, but saved his life by painting the Emperor's portrait and submitting it for his Majesty's approval. He ultimately obtained a free pardon, and was once more appointed to office. About 1060 he went as envoy to the Sung Emperor; and at a grand banquet in his honour he tried to take a picture of his Majesty, but was unable to do so owing to a large vase of flowers which intercepted his view. On retiring, however, he caught a passing glimpse of the Dragon Face, and finally produced a portrait which every one said was a remarkable likeness.

CHAPTER V

A. D. 960—1260

The Sung Dynasty

The "fire-led" Sung dynasty, which in 960 entered upon nearly three hundred years of political, literary, and artistic glory, now claims our attention. Its record of painters, extending to over eight hundred names, opens with several Imperial Princes, all of whom are sternly dealt with according to their merits, in such terms as these. "His best efforts were in flowers; but his colouring was coarse, and he was deficient in life and movement." As an exception, we have Prince Chün, the fourth son of the Emperor Ying Tsung, who abdicated in 1066. He seems to have been a real artist; and between 1068 and 1085 he presented more than ten petitions to his brother, the Emperor Shên Tsung, asking to be allowed to retire into private life. But the Emperor found him a congenial companion, and would not let him go. On the accession of his nephew in 1086, Prince Chün was finally allowed to leave, and ended his days in the quiet enjoyment of his art. "As a painter of the bamboo in black and white, its luxuriant foliage and jointed stalks, souging in the breeze or sparkling with dew, sweeping the clouds and sifting the moonlight,—he exhausted its every charm." After this eulogy, it reads almost like an anti-climax that "he was also a clever painter of shrimps."

His wife, too, was not only a poetess and a calligraphist, but also an artist in bamboo, like the Prince. It was even said that in consequence of the gracefulness of her work, "people suspected her of an arrangement by which the shadow of the bamboo was made to fall upon the silk." Some half-dozen other women-painters flourished about this time, chiefly ladies of the seraglio.

But their work was either not of a high order, or there was very little of it to be seen. "Nevertheless," in regard to the latter alternative a critic says, "for any woman or girl to accomplish even what this lady did, would be by no means an easy task."

With the advent of Li Ch'êng, known to the Japanese as Ri-sei, the long array of famous artists who helped to create one of China's Augustan Ages—for she has had several—may be fairly said to begin. He was descended from the Imperial House of T'ang, and his ancestors used to reside at Ch'ang-an, the capital, but had fled, on the collapse of the dynasty, to Ying-ch'iu in Shantung. By and by, when he had made his name, he came to be known as Li [of] Ying-ch'iu. "Very precocious in childhood, he grew up to be a fine young fellow, with an overfondness for wine, with considerable aptitude for music and chess, a great talent for landscape-painting, and a love for poetry. As to more trifling matters, he never gave them a thought." Altogether, he seems to have led the life of a roving ne'er-do-well, until a certain official, hearing of his reputation as a painter, sent him a pressing invitation. Li readily accepted; but on arriving at his new home he gave himself up to drinking and dissipation, and finally died of delirium tremens in a pot-house, at the early age of forty-nine.

His skill in landscape was so great that there was a great demand for his works, which were always difficult to obtain. "It was first necessary to ply him with liquor until he was tipsy; and then, no sooner did his brush descend, than mist and scenery burst forth in myriad shapes."

"In 970 a wealthy man, named Sun, who was collecting around him eminent individuals from all parts of the Empire, knowing that Li had great talents, such as would not easily be found, wrote a letter with a view to engage his services. Li replied with scorn, We scholars avoid coarse people, and associate only with connoisseurs. By nature I am a lover of hill and stream, and I wield my brush purely for my own amusement. How can I hurry off to the house of a great man, as if I were a mere artisan? Consequently, he did not go; but Sun, who was very angry, by dint of bribing the local officials managed after all to get hold of some of Li's paintings. Later on, when Li had taken

his degree, he happened to come across Sun at an official meeting, and was unable to resist a very humble invitation to the latter's house. But directly he got there, and saw his own pictures, he turned and went off in a huff."

"In his paintings, Li Ch'êng was true to Nature; and with the completion of his brushwork, the idea was fixed. Within the space of a foot he would sweep over a thousand *li*, expressing a myriad charms beneath his finger's tip. Lofty peaks on range behind range, with shrines and cottages peeping forth,—in these he excelled indeed; dense groves or thin groups of trees, flowing water shallow or deep,—in these it was as though he produced realities, pure in conception and after the old style, but superior to anything that antiquity could show."

Another critic, after a similar panegyric, in which he says that Li Ch'êng painted distant scenery, far-reaching forests, etc., in a way which no one had ever equalled, adds that "his skill was superhuman, unique in the present and the past, and a veritable exemplar for a hundred generations of artists. Even Wang Wei of old, Li Ssü-hsün and others, were not to be mentioned in the same day. Later painters, such as Yen Kuei, Chai Yüan-shên, Hsü Tao-ning, and others, may have caught some single characteristic, but in the completeness of his art not one of them even approached him." It is now, however, generally admitted that Kuo Hsi (see *post*) followed in the same line, and with a skill equal to that of his great predecessor.

The *Hsüan ho hua p'u* gives the titles of one hundred and fifty-nine of his pictures in the Imperial collection (12th cent.), every one of which is a landscape, or study of rocks or trees.

We are told that Li's grandson, who rose to high official rank, bought up at high prices all the pictures by his grandfather that he could possibly lay his hands on, the consequence being that such works became very rare in the market, and that students had to depend for their guidance in art upon copies. Thus, through the medium of engravings, seals, and signatures, many forgeries began to circulate; but we are assured that "connoisseurs have no difficulty in detecting these."

Here we must take leave of this great painter, of whom it was well said that "his talents and his destiny moved in different planes."

He left behind him some notes on art, of which the following is a specimen.

"In painting landscape, the first step is to settle the position of host and guest (the dominating and subordinate features), and secondly the relative distances of these. Then the scenery and objects may be sketched out, and heights and depths determined. The brush should not be applied too heavily, or muddiness, not clearness, will be the result; nor too lightly, or dulness, not brightness, will be the result."

Fan K'uan was really named Fan Chung-chêng; but because of his kindly, liberal-minded disposition, he was called Fan K'uan, which means Fan the Broad. No dates are given, except that he was said to be "still alive" about A.D. 1026.

"He loved wine, was rather wanting in energy, and unconventional; consequently he spent much of his time between the capital (Pien-liang) and Lo-yang (the old capital). He was fond of painting landscape, and began by modelling his style upon that of Li Ch'êng; but by and by his eyes were opened, and he said with a sigh, The method of my predecessors has not been to get into intimate relationship with things. Better than studying the style of a master will be to study the things themselves; and better even than studying things will be to study the inwardness of those things. Thereupon he gave up the system upon which he had been working, and retired to a beautifully wooded spot on the Chung-nan Mountain in Shensi. There he would gaze upon the shifting values of cloud and mist, the difficult effects of wind and moon and shadow and light, until at length his soul was filled with inspiration, and forth from his brush would come a thousand cliffs and myriad ravines. Then the spectator would feel himself strolling along some shady mountain path; and even though it might be the height of summer, a chill would come over him and a hurried desire for warmer clothes. Therefore, throughout the Empire Fan K'uan became known as one who could reproduce the spirit of the hills, worthy to drive his chariot abreast with Kuan T'ung or Li Ch'êng."

Another writer says, "Living among mountains and forests, he would sometimes spend a whole day sitting upon a crag and

looking all around to enjoy the beauties of the scene. Even on snowy nights, when there was a moon he would pace up and down, gazing fixedly in order that inspiration might come. He studied the art of Li Ch'êng; but although he succeeded to perfection, he was still inferior to his master. When subsequently he drew his inspiration from real scenery, with no superfluous ornamentation, then he gave to his mountains a genuine anatomy which ranks him as the founder of a school; and this characteristic of firmness and antiquity, plagiarised from no previous artist, entitles him to equal honours with Li Ch'êng. During the long sway of the House of Sung, these two were the only landscape-painters of the very first rank, and they have never been surpassed. In their day it was said that, looking into what seems close in Li Ch'êng's pictures, you see that it is a thousand *li* away; while when looking into the distance of Fan K'uan's pictures, the scenery seems to be at hand. Both may be said to have given their creations life."

A third panegyrist, after repeating much of what has already been given, adds that Fan K'uan "really grasped the very bones of the mountains. In his later years, however, he used too much ink, thus making earth and rocks indistinguishable."

"Tung Yüan," we are told, "was a native of Kiangnan, who had held an official post under the Later T'ang dynasty. He excelled in painting landscape, resembling Wang Wei in his use of neutral tints, and Li Ssü-hsün in his colouring. He also painted oxen and tigers, with masses of plump flesh and light billowy hair, full of spirit and originality." As to landscape, another authority informs us that "he chiefly painted hills and rocks and water-dragons; and although it is impossible to say if the shapes he gave to his dragons were real or not, it is quite certain that their descents and ascents were exactly those of hibernating creatures coming forth from their caves, while in playing with a pearl or roaring to the moon, their expression of emotions, joy or anger, would stir profound thoughts in the minds of beholders."

Elsewhere we read that Tung seldom drew upon his imagination for his landscapes, but almost always painted the hills of his own native country-side; and these, their peaks, precipices, and

valleys, in all the diverse phases of wind and rain and mist, he reproduced with such skill that "spectators seemed to see with their own eyes the very places indicated." His landscapes were also said to be "very stimulating to poets."

The following story, however, would seem to show that he was capable of succeeding in a very different line.

"One day, when the Emperor was sitting in his private apartments, he suddenly wished to consult with his Prime Minister, and dispatched a messenger for him accordingly. The Minister reached the entrance, but hesitated to go in; and after an interval the Emperor sent again for him to come with all speed. Then the Minister explained that he had seen one of the Emperor's ladies, dressed in a blue and red brocaded robe, standing in the vestibule, and that he had not ventured to intrude. The second messenger looked about in the direction towards which the Minister pointed, and discovered an eight-foot glass screen, on which had been painted the full-length figure of a beautiful girl. This painting was by Tung Yüan."

Shên Kua says, "Tung Yüan was a skilful painter of autumn mists and distant scenery. He mostly painted the actual hills of Kiangnan, and did not draw upon his imagination for marvellous cliffs. Later on came the Buddhist priest Chü Jan, who took Tung Yüan as his model, and succeeded in mastering the same principles of beauty. The works of these two painters must be seen from a distance, on account of the roughness of their brushwork. Seen close, the objects in their pictures seem almost like shapeless masses; but when held at a distance, the scenery and general details stand brilliantly out, stirring profound emotions and suggesting far-away thoughts, as though one were gazing upon some strange land. For instance, there is Tung Yüan's "Sunset." If you view it close, you see nothing remarkable in it; but if at a distance, then you observe its manifold beauties; you descry the village looming from the depths of the picture in the evening light, and the shadows thrown by the distant peaks."

Seventy-eight of Tung Yüan's pictures are mentioned in the *Hsüan ho hua p'u* as forming part of the Imperial collection (12th cent.), mostly landscapes. Among them are "Waiting for the Ferry-boat," "Watering Oxen," "Dragons at Play," "Riding

an Ox," "Portrait of an Immortal," "A Sea-shore," "Gathering Water-chestnuts," etc.

Kuo Chung-shu was a native of Lo-yang, the old capital, who matriculated at the age of seven, and rose to high rank in the public service. But he got into trouble more than once, and finally died in banishment, to which he had been sentenced for too freely criticising the Government. As a painter, "he excelled in houses, trees, forests, and rocks, all of which were in a style of his own." For an official who was always putting silk in his way, with a view to a picture, he once, when tipsy, dashed off a sketch of some distant hills in a corner of the silk; and even this was much prized by the owner. On another occasion, he went to the house of a wealthy man, whose son was very fond of pictures. After much wine had been consumed, "a table was set forth with some white silk on it, and also several scrolls of good paper. Kuo was then entreated to show his skill; and suddenly seizing a scroll, he painted at the foot a little boy holding a reel of thread, and at the top a kite, the middle being occupied by the thread which was drawn across it, giving the impression of great height. The youth for whom this was drawn, thought very poorly of it."

Others, too, had no high opinion of this artist. We read of a collector whose pictures by Kuo were always received with jeers and laughter, until many years had elapsed, and connoisseurs had assigned to him his rightful place in art. A later critic said, "When Kuo painted his far distant mountain peaks, the brush-work was not bad; but that which compelled the spectator to give in his allegiance so soon as he saw these pictures, was something beyond mere brush and paint."

The *Hsüan ho hua p'u*, gives the titles of thirty-four of his pictures then in the Imperial collection (12th cent.), among which are "Ming Huang's Summer Retreat," "Playing the Flageolet," "Pagoda on Snow Hill," "Gentlemen and Ladies in a Belvidere," etc.

Wang Shih-yüan inherited a love of painting from his father, who was also an artist. He collaborated with Kuo Chung-shu, adding the human figures required in the landscapes of his colleague, who was not at all good in that line. In return, he

modelled his houses and trees on those of Kuo Chung-shu, his human figures on those of Chou Fang, and his hills and streams on those of Kuan T'ung, whom he was said to have surpassed in harmony. We are told that "he made capital pictures of the horses in the Imperial stables, and even of broken-down old jades, giving to each its vigour or depression, its glossy or shaggy coat, as required."

Wang Kuan was a native of Lo-yang, a clever fellow and devoted to art, but too poor to be able to travel. He therefore gave himself up to the study of a picture by Wu Tao-tzŭ in a local temple dedicated to Lao Tzŭ. He cleaned up the picture, and applied himself to such purpose that he gradually transferred to his own brush much of the skill of the old master. His fame rapidly spread abroad; he was commonly known as Wu Tao-tzŭ the Younger, and it was said that between 963 and 976 he was positively without a rival. A fellow-countryman of his, whose enthusiasm may have been partly due to the bias of clanship, declared that, "In the presence of Wang Kuan's paintings, one forgets all about Wu Tao-tzŭ." Another admirer also said, "We have got Wang Kuan; what do we want with Wu Tao-tzŭ?" His characteristics were summed up as "careful and elaborate delineation, clear and smooth colouring."

Chao Yüan-ch'ang may be mentioned because he was an astronomer as well as a painter. He had been Keeper of the Observatory under the Shu State, and had employed his art on behalf of his profession by preparing celestial maps. He drew portraits of living persons, and also of the Sixteen Lohans; and the old pheasant story once more appears in connection with his name,—how he painted a pheasant on a wall, and how a falcon mistook it for a real bird.

Not much space has been allotted by Chinese biographers and critics to the life and works of Shih K'ò, and curiously enough for the very reason which may be held to justify some reference here. As in Chinese literature, novels, comedies, and writings of a light, not to say flippant, character find no place whatever; so, in Chinese art, pictures must be dignified and serious, if they are to command the attention of men of education and refinement. Now Shih was a humorist, a satirist, a cartoonist;

consequently, although his talents were undeniable, his work was received with a qualified enthusiasm. Thus we read:

"Shih K'ò was a native of (modern) Ssüch'üan. By nature he was a witty fellow, fond of argument. He painted Buddhist and Taoist personages. At first he studied Chang Nan-pên (the painter of fire), but afterwards he followed his own fancies, without limitations of any kind. Upon the pacification of Ssüch'üan, A.D. 965, he went to Court, and received a commission to paint the walls of a temple. He also received an appointment in the Imperial Picture Gallery, which he never took up, vigorously petitioning to be allowed to return to Ssüch'üan. His prayer was granted. He could not stand the conventionalities of the capital, and turned them into ridicule, many of his jests becoming widely circulated."

Another writer says, "Although his brushwork was of a high order, it was somewhat lacking in attractiveness, while his pictures invariably contained a sneer or a jibe." Again, "In harmony and conception he far surpassed Chang Nan-pên. He loved to paint weird beings and uncanny shapes; and although his style was lofty and archaic, his ideas were so novel and strange that he cannot escape classification in these senses." Again, "Witty without restraint, at the expense of his generation, the shapes and faces he painted were hideously ugly, or distinguished by some oddness, in order to show his versatility." Finally, "Shih K'ò's work was mostly of a humorous character, and his people appeared in all kinds of wonderful shapes. Only the faces, hands, and feet, were painted according to rule; the creases in draperies were touched off in the roughest fashion."

A well-known picture called "The Laughing Trio" has been attributed to him by Su Tung-p'ò, who describes it thus. "There are three men all loudly laughing, and even their clothes, hats, and shoes seem to be affected in like manner. Even the servant-boy in the background is laughing without knowing why." Su Tung-p'ò does not say who the three men are; a later writer, however, undeterred by the silence of the above great authority, makes them out to be Hui Yüan, a Buddhist priest, T'ao Yüan-ming the poet, and Lu Hsiu-ching, a Taoist priest, who were said to have met at Lu-shan. Unfortunately, as is pointed out

by a third writer, the first two died in 416 and 427, respectively, while the last-mentioned only went to Lu-shan some twenty years after the death of T'ao Yüan-ming. Anderson (*Pictorial Arts of Japan*, Pl. XXI) has a picture entitled "The Three Laughers," which he attributes to Moto-nobu of the 16th century, and which is evidently the same as that described by Su Tung-p'o, although there is no servant-boy, for the names of the three personages are wrongly given as above in the left-hand top corner. A point left unnoticed by Anderson is the inscription in the middle of the right-hand side, which tells us that "the eyes are drawn according to the ancient style," evidently meaning that the apparent obliquity, so characteristic of modern Chinese eyes, is not to be found in these faces. From this fact alone it would be easy to infer that the peculiarity in question was, so late as the 10th century, one of comparatively recent growth among the Chinese people.

Kao I was a Kitan Tartar, already distinguished as a painter of Buddhist and Taoist deities when he went to China during the reign of the founder of the Sung dynasty (960—976). "He settled at the capital, and began by keeping a druggist's shop, at which every customer received, together with his purchase (one account says, on the paper wrapper), a picture of some ghostly being, or of a dog or a horse." This soon became noised abroad, and reached the ears of the Emperor, who was so pleased with Kao's picture of "Demons on a Mountain" that he ordered it to be engraved, and appointed the artist to a post in the Imperial Picture Gallery. Another of his more famous pictures was "Cloud Plantains," and we are told that "the people of the capital rubbed shoulders in their eagerness to enjoy it." Respectable Chinamen will not as a rule crowd and crush for any purpose whatever.

He also painted as a fresco at a temple a picture of a band of musicians in full blast, in reference to which one critic said the guitars were out of time with the flutes, while a rival critic said they were in time. Pictures of archery and hunting are likewise included among his works.

"Kao I used ink (black) heavily, and laid on his colours lightly. He was strong in variety, and did not dwell upon a single motive."

Tung Yü first exercised his art under the last ruler of the Southern T'ang State. When the latter finally yielded to the Sung dynasty, Tung accompanied his master to Court, and was immediately patronised by the Emperor T'ai Tsung, A.D. 976—997. He received an order to paint some dragons on the walls of a favourite belvedere; and "after spending six months over the work, he was congratulating himself upon his luck, when one day the Emperor, followed by the ladies of the seraglio, went up to have a look. At that time the Heir Apparent was a little child, and he was so terrified at the sight of the dragons that he howled pitifully, and the Emperor forthwith gave orders that the walls should be whitewashed. The artist got no reward, which was also his luck."

A critic writes of him, "Tung Yü was skilled in painting fishes, dragons, and the ocean,—not miserable shoal water nor the oozy foreshore, nor froth glistening in dried-up furrows, but the ocean of boisterous storms lashing up miles of waves, with terrifying lightning and angry billows, in which he made his dragons appearing or disappearing, in every variety of sudden movement and shape."

Passing over numerous minor artists who gained reputation by success in painting the creases of clothes, singing-birds, Buddhist deities thirty feet in height, or by having, as one painter had, brushes in every room, including his bedroom, so that they might be ready for him at moments of inspiration,—we may fairly devote a few lines to Ch'i Hsü. He was a painter of flowers, bamboos, fur, and feathers; but he excelled in cats and oxen. "His cats and oxen were all of them such as one sees every day,—very difficult subjects to paint."

Hsü Ch'ung-sü painted flowers and insects, excelling in fallen fruit and the cocoons of silkworms. He is remarkable as having been the first artist to "paint without previously sketching the subject, producing his pictures by simply laying on the five colours." He found imitators, such as Chao Ch'ang and others; but altogether the innovation was not approved of, and his works were spoken of disparagingly as boneless pictures." One hundred and forty-two of his works are mentioned in the *Hsüan ho hua p'u* as in the Imperial collection (12th cent.), all in the lines indicated above.

Yen Wên-kuei was a landscape-painter, who went to the capital seeking his fortune, and sold his pictures in the streets. Some of these were seen by Kao I, when already enjoying the Imperial favour, and he brought them to the notice of the Emperor, with a request that the artist might be employed to assist him by painting the trees and rocks in the great frescos upon which he was engaged. Yen was accordingly sent for, and was commanded by the Emperor to paint "his Minister's portrait," in obvious allusion to Kao I. However, when Yen handed up his work, it turned out to be a white silk fan, on which he had painted a portrait of himself; and luckily for him, the Emperor was a man who could appreciate a joke as well as a painting.

"There was preserved in the Kao family a sea-picture by Yen Wên-kuei, not a foot square in size. The ships were like leaves, and the sailors like grains of barley; nevertheless the spars, sails, and sweeps, the pointing, shouting, and hurried movements of the crew, were all fully delineated; while the fury of wind and wave, the neighbouring isles and islets, with monsters of the deep now and again rising into view,—a thousand *li* in a foot of space—produced indeed a wonderful effect."

One critic says, "Yen did not model his style upon that of any old master, but originated a style of his own. His scenery in all its changing variety was so lovely that spectators fancied themselves at the very spots, and his painting created a form of landscape known as 'scenery of the Yen school.'"

Another critic adds the following to some remarks in a similar strain. "The minuteness and the clearness of his detail were delightful, but he was lacking in anatomical strength." No dates are forthcoming beyond a mention of work done by him in 1008.

Sun Chih-wei is described as a painter of miscellaneous subjects, who took as his model the Buddhist priest Ling Tsung. Descending from a race of agriculturists, he himself was an ardent follower of Lao Tzŭ, as well as of Buddha. "His appearance was that of a rustic. He had a passion for cleanliness; and whenever he was about to paint Taoist or Buddhist deities he would concentrate his mind and bring himself into a state of calmness and abstraction, neither eating meat nor drinking wine."

Another account says that "he would never under any circumstances eat food cooked by a woman; and when people played sly tricks to test him, he always found them out."

"On one occasion he sketched on a wall in a temple at Ch'êng-tu (the capital of Ssüch'uan) the Nine Bright Ones, and instructed his apprentice to lay on the colour. Now among the attendants in the picture there was one who held in his hand a crystal vase, and in this the apprentice inserted a lotus-flower. When Sun came to see it, he said, This bottle holds under its sway all the waters of the earth (crystal is supposed to be the quintessence of water). I have grasped the very warp of the Infinite, and for you to add a flower thereto is a grievous error. Thus it came to be recognised that Sun's skill was beyond the reach of ordinary lay-painters."

Su Tung-p'o, however, dismisses him in contemptuous terms. "His hand was not the hand of an artist, but of an artisan."

The *Hsüan ho hua p'u* classes him as a painter of religious subjects, and gives the titles of thirty-seven of his works in the Imperial collection (12th cent.).

T'ung I was first and foremost a painter of portraits, the art of which he is said "to have known at birth." He introduced into a religious fresco the portrait of a leading statesman of the day, and this was said to be so lifelike that "it seemed to stand out from the wall." About 1012 he was painting six frescos for another notability, when he suddenly addressed his patron, saying, "People nowadays assert that playing the lute is not music, and that portrait-painting is not art. What is your opinion?" The latter drew his attention to a passage in the *Tso Chuan*, in which it is expressly stated that lute-playing is regarded as music by musicians.

Mou Ku seems to have been a portrait-painter and nothing else. We hear of him in 988 as "dispatched on a mission to paint the portrait of Li Huan, King of Annam, and of his principal Ministers. He remained in Annam some years, and on his return was appointed to the Imperial Equipage Department, but fell into disfavour and resigned. After some years of retirement, he seized upon the occasion of a visit by the Emperor Chên Tsung (997—1022) to a neighbouring temple, to hang up

in the doorway a portrait he himself had painted of the founder of the dynasty. When the Emperor saw this, he ordered Mou to be arrested and brought before him, and asked him where he had got it. On telling his story, he was set at liberty; the fact being that formerly an artist named Wang Ai had been commissioned to paint the founder's portrait, and that when it was finished another commission for a full-face portrait had been given before his disgrace to Mou Ku. Shortly after this incident, the latter was appointed to the Han-lin College,—the only artist capable of painting a full-face portrait."

It is disappointing to find the drug-and-wrapper story (see p. 92) retold in connection with Hsü Tao-ning, an artist who began by painting landscape after the style of Li Ch'êng, with original characteristics of his own, but who sank finally to pothouse caricature. "Whenever he saw any one asleep, or a very ugly person, he would amuse himself by caricaturing them at the pouthouses, and those who knew the victims would roar with laughter. And although he was severely thrashed, his clothes torn, and his face spoilt, he could not mend his ways."

Chai Yüan-shên was a landscape-painter, and a successful imitator of Li Ch'êng, many of his pictures having been bought up in mistake by the grandson of the greater master when collecting his grandfather's works (see *ante*). He had originally been a drummer in a local band; and one day, when the Governor was giving a grand banquet and he was in the middle of a piece, his eye suddenly wandered as if attracted by something, and the band got out of time. The other musicians blamed him, and the Governor asked what he meant by it. By nature, said he, I am a lover of painting; and in one of my intervals I saw a floating cloud which shaped itself into wondrous peaks and sheer precipices, such as I thought would make an ideal picture. My eyes could not look both ways at once, and so I got out of time."

Wu Tsung-yüan became a professional painter at the age of seventeen, and soon made a name for himself by his treatment of Buddhist and Taoist subjects. "About A.D. 1010 it was announced that skilled artists were required for painting certain frescos in the Palace, and this brought together over three

thousand applicants. A hundred or so were chosen, and of these Wu's name headed the list. He thus became much more widely known, and there was not one of his contemporaries but did him homage." "His brush moved like flowing water," and it seemed "as if he was writing in the grass-character," to accomplish which the brush is lifted as seldom as possible from the paper. Procrastination, however, must be set off against his speed of execution, if we are to believe the following story.

"A rich merchant, who was extremely fond of pictures, frequently paid visits to him, extending over some ten years, in the hope of obtaining a Goddess of Mercy (Kuan Yin) with moonlight on the water. At length Wu promised he should have it; but three more years elapsed before the picture was finished, and when at length Wu took it to the merchant's house, he found that the man was already dead."

It is also related that when painting the thirty-six Taoist gods on the walls of a temple at Ch'ang-an, he secretly introduced the likeness of the Emperor T'ai Tsung, 976—997, making his Majesty do duty for a certain red-faced deity, on the ground that the symbol of the House of Sung was *fire*. Some years afterwards the next Emperor, Chên Tsung, was visiting the temple, when suddenly he caught sight of the portrait. "Why, this is his late Majesty," he cried in alarm; and at once gave orders for incense to be burnt while he himself made obeisance before the picture.

Among painters of flowers and fruit, Chao Ch'ang, known to the Japanese as Chō-shō, holds a very high place. In his youth, at the beginning of the 11th century, he wandered about a good deal in modern Ssüch'uan, and left behind him many of his "traces," as the Chinese call them; but late in life he went back, and bought up as many of them as he could obtain, so that his pictures became rare in the market. "Other artists," says one critic, "produce an accurate resemblance of the flowers they paint; but the art of Chao Ch'ang not only produces an accurate resemblance, but hands over to you the very soul of the flower along with it." "Every morning, before the dew had gone, he would walk round the garden and examine some flower carefully, turning it over and over in his hand. Then he would

prepare his paints and paint it. He called himself Draw-from-Life; but people in general declared that his flowers were dyed, and not produced by colour laid on. This in fact is a test of their genuineness: if when rubbed with the hand no colour comes off on the fingers, the flowers are indubitably from the brush of Chao Ch'ang."

The *Hsüan ho hua p'u* gives the titles of one hundred and fifty-four of his works in the Imperial collection, all in the lines indicated above.

I Yüan-chi, known to the Japanese as I-gen-kitsu, was a native of Hunan, who "began his career as a painter of flowers and birds. When, however, he saw what Chao Ch'ang had achieved, he said, The age does not lack men; what I must do to make a name is to strike out in some original line not already occupied by the men of old. Thereupon he set off to travel far and wide, visiting famous mountains and great rivers; and whenever he came across any particularly fine scenery, there he would fix his attention, and roam about almost as it were in the very company of the gibbon, the deer, and the wild boar. And so when he came to transfer with his brush these experiences of mind and eye, the result was something of which the everyday world had never succeeded in catching a glimpse. Then when at home, at the back of his own house he laid out a garden and dug ponds, with rockwork and bamboos and rushes, and kept there a variety of waterfowl and animals, so as to be able to watch them in movement and in repose, and to reproduce them more successfully in his pictures. Thus it was that in this branch of art no one came out on his right,"—*i. e.*, surpassed him, the right-hand being then the place of honour instead of the left, as in the present day.

We hear of him in 1066, employed in decorating the Palace walls. His picture of "A Hundred Gibbons" is several times mentioned as a masterpiece, but no details are given to afford a clue either to the composition or to its style. One authority says, "I Yüan-chi painted an immense number of pictures, and signed them himself as follows, Painted by I Yüan-chi, otherwise known as Chu-chiao, of Ch'ang-sha." The *Hsüan ho hua p'u* gives the titles of two hundred and forty-five works of his in

the Imperial collection, among which were many landscapes, animals, birds, flowers, fruits, etc.

In the process of skipping, we often come across points of interest even in the lives of minor artists. We read how one of the latter studied the tiger from a live animal owned by a druggist at the capital, tigers' claws and teeth being both included in the Chinese pharmacopoeia. Another painted for the Palace a picture, over ten feet in height, of female *dévas*, playing upon their musical instruments. Another painted camels; another wielded a brush such as is used for whitewashing walls, and so on.

Kao K'o-ming "was a lover of darkness and silence; he loved to roam about in wild country, and gaze abstractedly for a whole day on the beauties of mountain and forest. Then, when he returned home, he would remain in some quiet room, shut off all thoughts and cares, and allow his soul to pass beyond the bounds of this world." About A.D. 1012 he was appointed to the Imperial Picture Gallery. In 1022 a boy-Emperor succeeded to the throne, and the Empress-Dowager ordered Kao and other artists to illustrate a number of striking incidents in the lives of the preceding Emperors of the Sung dynasty, and also of the leading statesmen and generals connected with the House. These were put into book form, with suitable letter-press, and his Majesty's female attendants were instructed to see that it was constantly on hand for their charge's amusement. The work, we are told, was beautifully executed by Kao; "the human figures were just about one inch in height, and the palaces, halls, mountains, streams, bells, conveyances, and regalia of all kinds, were every one duly delineated." After expatiating on Kao's skill in landscape, "in which he almost seemed to walk hand in hand with Nature," one critic adds the following quaint passage. "He was also good at Taoist and Buddhist subjects, horses, flowers, birds, spiritual beings, buildings, etc. If influential people asked him for pictures, he would often refuse; but to friends he would gladly give them. He was generous and chivalrous,—virtues rarely found among painter folk."

Ch'ên Yung-chih was appointed to the Imperial Picture Gallery about A.D. 1027, but in 1034 he felt himself unable to carry out some inartistic suggestions by the Emperor, and ran away

and disappeared into private life. He painted religious subjects, landscape, men, horses, etc. "His pictures were much sought after," according to one writer, "and his door was thronged daily. But he mostly sketched in a desultory way on scraps of paper or silk, for his own amusement; consequently, works of his are very rare." Here we have paper and silk mentioned together for the first time, the former being frequently mentioned alone in reference to artists of this period.

Another critic says, "The fineness of his work was very remarkable, and difficult to surpass; his conceptions however were over-elaborated, and his style was lacking in clearness."

When some of his pictures were shown by him to Sung Ti, a contemporary artist, the latter said, "The technique in these is very good, but there is a want of natural effect. You should choose an old tumbledown wall, and throw over it a piece of white silk. Then morning and evening you should gaze at it, until at length you can see the ruin through the silk, its prominences, its levels, its zigzags, and its cleavages, storing them up in the mind and fixing them in the eye. Make the prominences your mountains, the lower parts your water, the hollows your ravines, the cracks your streams, the lighter parts your nearer points, the darker parts your more distant points. Get all these thoroughly into you, and soon you will see men, birds, plants, and trees, flying and moving among them. You may then play your brush according to your fancy, and the result will be of heaven, not of man,"—natural, not artificial. We are further told that "Ch'ên's eyes were opened, and from that time his style improved."

Sung Ti himself, who gave the above advice, was especially famous for his distant landscapes, and Su Tung-p'ô declared that "for hills, streams, plants, and trees, he surpassed any one of his generation." A set of eight pictures by him were much sought after by collectors, and were described as follows: "Geese settling on a level plain," "Sails homing up a long reach," "Fair-weather breeze on the hills," "Snowy evening on the River (Yang-tsze)," "Autumn moon on the Tung-t'ing Lake," "Night rain on the Hsiao and Hsiang (rivers; at their junction)," "Evening bell from mist-clad temple," and "Fishing village in the sunset."

The name of Kuo Hsi, known to the Japanese as Kwakki, stands among the greatest of Chinese painters. Unfortunately, we are not told very much about him. Anderson says he "flourished in the period Kai [K'ai] Pao (968—976),"—a century before his time. We read that "he was admitted into the Imperial Picture Gallery as a student, and that by his landscapes and gloomy forests he soon made a name for himself. At first he relied on cleverness of touch, but gradually he began to put more work into his pictures, and to adopt the method of Li Ch'êng. His compositions were very much improved thereby; and then, later on, he came to seek inspiration and ideas from himself, giving free play to his hand on the walls of lofty halls. For tall pines, huge trees, swirling streams, beetling crags, steep precipices, mountain peaks, now lovely in the rising mist, now lost in an obscuring pall, with all their thousand and ten thousand shapes,—critics allow that he strode alone across his generation, and that old age only added extra vigour to his brush."

As regards dates, we are told that in 1068 he received the Imperial command to paint, in collaboration with two contemporary artists, a screen in three panels, the middle one being allotted to him. He published a treatise entitled "On Landscape-painting," in which "he discusses distance, depth, wind and rain, light and darkness; also the differences of nights and mornings at the four seasons of the year; how in a painting the spring hills should melt as it were into a smile, how the summer hills should be as it were a blend of blue and green, how the autumn hills should be clear and pure as a honey cake(?), and how the winter hills should appear as though asleep." There is another passage in which he speaks of "a great mountain grandly dominating the lesser hills, and a tall pine offering a splendid example to other trees,"—but here, says a critic, he is no longer on ground consecrated to painting alone.

The following are extracts from his writings.

"Landscape is a big thing, and should be viewed from a distance in order to grasp the scheme of hill and stream. The figures of men and women are small matters, and may be spread out on the hand or on a table for examination, when they will be taken in at a glance."

"Those who study flower-painting take a single stalk and put it into a deep hole, and then examine it from above, thus seeing it from all points of view. Those who study bamboo-painting take a stalk of bamboo, and on a moonlight night project its shadow on to a piece of white silk on a wall; the true form of the bamboo is thus brought out. It is the same with landscape painting. The artist must place himself in communion with his hills and streams, and the secret of the scenery will be solved."

"Hills have three distances. From the foot looking up to the summit is called height-distance. From the front looking through to the back is called depth-distance. From near hills looking away to far-off hills is called level-distance. The colour for height-distance should be bright and clear; that for depth-distance heavy and dark; and that for level-distance may be either bright or dark."

"Hills without clouds look bare; without water they are wanting in fascination; without paths they are wanting in life; without trees they are dead; without depth-distance they are shallow; without level-distance they are near; and without height-distance they are low."

Mr. Arthur Morrison (*Monthly Review*, Sept., 1902) has the following remarks.

"The Japanese tell us, in a proverb that explains the philosophy of their art in a sentence, that a poem is a picture with a voice; a picture a voiceless poem." Now Kuo Hsi in one of his notes speaks of "a phrase in use by earlier writers," which says that "a poem is a picture without form, a picture is a poem with form." T'ao Shu-ming too is also quoted in the *Ni ku lu* as having called a picture "a soundless (voiceless) poem;" and altogether it seems very probable that the original germ of the saying must be looked for in China rather than in Japan.

There is one more point in Mr. Morrison's interesting article which may be dealt with here. Speaking of clothing national heroes in foreign garb, he says, "I cannot find that any Japanese painter ever went so far as to clothe Japanese figures in Chinese dress." But the so-called national dress of Japan is nothing more than the dress worn in China under the T'ang dynasty, appropriated by the Japanese to their own uses in an age when the civilisation of China stood in Japan for everything that was good

and worthy of imitation. See "Japan's Debt to China" in *The Nineteenth Century and After*, Feb. 1905.

The *Hsüan ho hua p'u* gives the titles of thirty of Kuo Hsi's pictures, all landscapes, in the Imperial collection.

Kuo Hsi is much praised for the care he devoted to the education of his son, who took the *chin shih* degree and subsequently rose to high rank. This son "also showed deep insight into pictures, but this alone was not enough to give him a reputation." When he rose to power, like many other filial sons, he bought up numbers of his father's pictures. Two different authorities, however, give two different reasons for this pious behaviour; (1) because he wished to have the pictures in the family, and (2) because he was desirous of obliterating all traces of his father's career as an artist.

Not long after Kuo's death, a number of his pictures had a very narrow escape. An official, on whom a mansion had been bestowed, while watching the servants putting it into order, noticed that one of them was cleaning the furniture with a piece of coloured silk. Examining this closely, he found it was a picture by Kuo Hsi; and on enquiring further he learnt that there were many more pictures of the same kind in a lumber-room. It appeared that the Emperor Shên Tsung, Kuo's patron, had kept Kuo's works in this building; but that the next Emperor had caused them to be put away, to find room for works by the older masters, in which he was more interested.

Ts'ui Po and Ts'ui K'o were two brothers, the elder of whom is the better known. He painted a variety of subjects, and is noted for his impatience of such aids as rulers and compasses. Ultimately he sank into indolent habits, and nothing short of an Imperial Decree could get a picture out of him. In one temple he painted a magnificent Buddha with a dazzling aureole, which seemed to the spectator's eyes to move.

Ts'ui K'o found a line which he made his own. He painted hares, distinguishing carefully between "the hare of the mountain forest, which has scant fur, and which has not a white belly, and the hare of the plain, where the vegetation is shorter, and which has plenty of fur and a white belly."

The *Hsüan ho hua p'u* gives two hundred and forty-one and

sixty-seven titles of pictures by these two brothers, respectively, in the Imperial collection.

We have now to pass over a further number of lesser celebrities, some of whom have small items of interest connected with their forgotten names. One minor painter, who had much vogue in his day, unable to meet the demand for his works, began, as he grew older, to sign pictures by his pupils and palm them off as his own work. Again, we read of a painter whose colours would not come off on the fingers, of another who painted village scenes, and of a third who produced fish-studies from life, which he secured by almost living in the water with the fishes themselves. Another painted on a fan a picture which he entitled "The Three Religions," popularly understood as Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism. This theme he illustrated by "two boys playing chess in front of a Buddhist priest, one of whom was elated by victory and the other writhing under defeat, while the priest looked on and laughed, with an expression that was absolutely life-like."

Another artist painted on a temple wall a kind of panorama of a mountain stream, in which there was one stroke of his brush forty feet in length. "To stand and look at its eddying onrush made one's eyes quite dazed; while if you stood near and raised your head, you would feel a chill as though the spray were splashing on your face." Years afterwards this temple was destroyed by fire; but the wall on which the river was painted would not burn, and the picture was saved.

Another artist painted bamboos and trees with such delicacy that they almost seemed to sway in the wind. He was much pestered by friends, who sent him pieces of silk with the usual request for a picture. Ultimately he took no notice of such applications, and used the silk for stockings.

Wang An-shih, 1021—1086, was perhaps a tenth-rate painter; but he was China's greatest Reformer, and one of the most remarkable men she has ever produced. Of course as a scholar he painted landscape; only one picture, however, seems to have been recorded. This contained about a dozen pine-trees, which are said to have been skilfully painted, and some human figures, "the bodies of which were very short, and the faces very large."

An inscription stated that the picture was painted in 1052, but this was neither in the style nor in the handwriting of Wang An-shih. "It was probably a forgery by a later hand."

Somewhat in the same sense is it necessary to speak of Su Shih, popularly known as Su Tung-p'ò. This great statesman, poet, and philosopher, was an artist of some distinction; and though by no means in the first rank, yet he was in a different class altogether from Wang An-shih. His bamboo studies in black and white were very highly esteemed. "These he drew from the ground straight up to the very tip. I asked him," says Mi Fei, the painter and still more famous art-critic, "why he did not divide his bamboos at the joints (as may be seen in any ordinary Chinese picture); to which he replied, Who ever saw bamboos growing with divisions at the joints?" Su himself was a very incisive critic, and his opinions on his predecessors and contemporaries in art have frequently been drawn upon in this book.

In one place he says, "The art of drawing cannot be taught, for it depends upon co-ordination of hand and eye, which comes about unconsciously; how then can you impart that of which you are unconscious?" He adds that "to copy the masterpieces of antiquity is only to grovel among the dust and husks without attaining to a true presentment."

In another of his notes on art, Su Tung-p'ò writes as follows.

"The difficulty of giving the true expression to a portrait is with the eyes. Ku K'ai-chih says that the whole difficulty lies in the eyes, and that cheekbones and jaws are of secondary importance. Now on one occasion, noticing the shadow of my jaw projected on the wall by a lamp, I caused it to be outlined, but with no eyebrows nor eyes put in. Those who saw it burst out laughing, and recognised the likeness at once. If the eyes, cheekbones, and jaws, are like, the other features will be like; the eyebrows, nose, and mouth can be made like by adding or taking away. If you want to get at the natural expression of a man, you should secretly observe his behaviour with other people; but nowadays he is made to adjust his hat and clothes, and sit down and gaze at some object. The result is that he puts on a face which is not his; how then can you expect to reach his

real self? Men keep their thoughts each in some particular spot, such as the eyes and eyebrows, or the nose and mouth. Ku K'ai-chih said that by putting three extra hairs on a man's jaw he could bring out his expression at once; he meant, of course, when the man's thoughts were in his jaws.

"Yu Mêng (the actor) studied the way of clapping hands, the speech and laugh, of Sun Shu-ao, until people began to think that the latter had risen from the dead. Where then is the necessity for the whole body to be like? It is enough to portray the spots where the thoughts are manifested; and if painters would only keep this principle in mind, every one of them might be a Ku K'ai-chih or a Lu T'an-wei. When I first saw the portrait of Duke Tsêng, painted by a Buddhist priest who was a friend of mine, I did not think it very like; but some days later I went again, and found that the artist had come home full of joy. I have it, he cried, and proceeded to add three lines behind the eyebrows, which made the head appear to be looking up, the eyebrows raised and the forehead wrinkled, thereby securing an excellent likeness."

The following story is told by Shên Kua, 1030—1093, the well-known archaeologist and oft-quoted art-critic; but unfortunately no names are given of any of the painters who came to such a tragic end.

"When Wang Hung (beginning of 8th century) was holding Shên-chou, he collected a number of skilful artists to paint for him the walls of a temple, and the result was a series of most beautiful pictures. The painters, eighteen in number, were then put to death, and buried beneath the west wing of the temple in one grave, in order that no second series of the kind should be produced. Of their work some ten or more pictures are still remaining. That in the west wing, "Receiving the Relic of Buddha," and that in the east court, "The Mother of Buddha," are exceedingly fine, and their splendid colouring makes them instinct with motion. Second to these are the pictures of "Ariti" (the Mother of Demons, devourer of babies), and "Lean Buddha;" the rest are in no way extraordinary."

The following note is also taken from the voluminous writings of Shên Kua.

"In painting oxen and tigers, it is always customary to paint the hair, but the hair of horses is not painted. On my asking an artist why this was, he replied that a horse's hair is too fine, and cannot be brought out; but when I suggested that a rat's hair was still finer and yet was always painted, he had nothing to say. Now a horse is never seen in a painting to be more than a foot in size, which is a great proportionate reduction, and therefore the hair would be far too fine to be reproduced; whereas a rat generally has about the same measurement as in real life, and therefore the hair ought to be painted. This principle would seem to apply equally to the ox and to the tiger; the hair however of these animals is long, and a distinction has accordingly to be made. Li Ch'êng, whenever he put kiosques, pagodas, or other buildings, on the mountains of his landscapes, painted them with cocked-up eaves, so that the spectator looked upwards and saw the inner part; because, he said, the point of view was below the object, just as a man standing beneath a pagoda sees above him the rafters of the eaves. This reasoning is faulty. For in landscape there is a method of looking at big things as if they were small (aerial perspective). If people looked at imitation hills in the same way that they look at real hills, that is, looking from the base up to the summit, it would only be possible to see one range at a time, and not range behind range; neither would the ravines and valleys in the mountains be visible. Similarly, you ought not to see the middle court of a house, nor what is going on in the back premises. You cannot lay down the rule that if you have a man on the east side, then the west side of the hill must contain the distant scenery, and vice versa; under such conditions no picture could possibly be painted. Li Ch'êng did not know the method by which big objects are made to look small. By this method effects of height and distance can be more skilfully secured than by simply cocking up the corners of houses."

"Landscape," says another writer, "consists in position. Artists who are concerned with the distance or size of objects, are guided in each case by the light of nature. It is their business to place on their silk a reduction of a scene, without depriving it of naturalness, and not to make it suggest the idea of brush

and colour. The result is a fine picture; and herein lies the truth of the ancient adage that in painting there are no real hills nor living water."

With regard to landscape, one writer asserts that "only in landscape are depth and distance to be found, coupled with delights which never cease to please. Hence it is that literary men who wield the brush turn mostly to landscape. Human figures, birds, insects, flowers, and plants, belong more to artisan art; and although painted with exceeding skill, their beauties are exhausted at a glance."

Another writer declares that it is comparatively easy to paint fine weather turning to rain, but very difficult to suggest rainy weather turning to fine.

Chang Wên, a minor artist, painted a picture which he called "A Crouching Tiger." A critic said with some severity that not a mouse would venture near it,—meaning that it was like a cat.

There is also a story of two sons who inherited a large collection of pictures from their father, and who were so jealous of each other that to secure absolute fairness they cut every single picture into two pieces, and each took a half.

Li Kung-lin, popularly known as Li Lung-mien, Li of the Dragon Face, (*Japanese*, Ri-riu-min), has been described by one critic as "the first among all the painters of the Sung dynasty, equal in brilliancy to the masters of olden times." He belonged to a literary family, and in 1070 he himself gained the highest degree and entered upon an official career. After serving in several important posts, he was compelled in 1100 by rheumatism to resign, and retired to the Lung-mien Hill, from which he took his fancy name, and where he died in 1106. He was a man of many talents. "He wrote in the style of the Chien-an period (A.D. 196—220); his calligraphy was that of the Chin-Sung epoch (3rd and 4th centuries); his painting ranked with that of Ku K'ai-chih and Lu T'an-wei; and as a widely-informed connoisseur in bells, incense-burners, and antiques generally, he was quite without a rival in his day."

"During the ten years he was in office at the capital, he never frequented the mansions of influential persons; but whenever he got a holiday, if the weather was propitious, he would

An Arhat and an Apsara.

Attributed to LI KUNG-LIN (LI LUNG-MIEN).

Reproduced by permission from 'The Kokka' magazine, Tokio.

A magnificent example of the religious painting of the Sung dynasty, whether actually by the hand of Li Lung-mien or no. The reigning qualities of this art,—serenity and grandeur expressed by means of a rhythm of fluid lines building up a majestic composition, apparent also in the calm and superhuman figures,—denote a period of climax, similar to those from which Phidias and Raphael were produced. In such periods the energy and force of a previous age have attained balance and harmony, which in their turn have not yet given way to insipid grace and mannered skill. Grand in design, this picture loses vastly without its colour—the faint lilac and dull blue of the draperies of the saint, the sudden edge of crimson on the robe of the nymph, answered by the red of the lotus which she carries, glowing from the low-toned silk.

L. B.



Li Kung-lin or Li Lung-mien.

pack up some wine and go out of the city, taking with him two or three congenial companions. Then in some famous garden or leafy wood he would sit on a rock by the water, while the hours passed quickly by." "During all the thirty years of his official life, he never for one day forgot mountain and forest; therefore his pictures were those scenes which he had brought together in his own mind. Late in life, when suffering from rheumatism, between the groans he would raise his hand and sketch as it were upon the bedclothes; and when his family forbade him to do so, he smiled and said, The old habit has not gone from me; I do this unconsciously."

In his early career he was especially fond of painting horses, and his animals were said by some to surpass even those of Han Kan himself. Su Tung-p'o, in one of his poems, thus alludes to his anatomical skill:

In Lung-mien's brain a thousand horses swell;
He paints their flesh, and paints their bones as well.

He would pass hours gazing at the horses in the Imperial stables, some of which came in tribute from Khoten and other foreign countries. It was even alleged that, because "six of these tribute-horses died soon after being painted by Li, the artist had entered into the very seat of life, and had stolen the vital principle from their bodies." At length a Buddhist priest reproved him, saying, "The disposition of all living creatures is determined by influences gathered upon them during past æons of time. Now your mind is taken up solely with horses. Take care lest by process of metempsychosis you become a horse yourself." At this Li was much alarmed, and took to painting Buddhist pictures, in which he soon excelled.

Wang Mai, writing in 1206, tells us that soon after Li Lung-mien abandoned the study of horses, he undertook a picture of the Five Hundred Lohans or disciples of Shâkyamuni Buddha, which occupied him for several years. According to Wang Mai, who actually saw the picture, these disciples, "fat, thin, tall, short, old, young, handsome, ugly, had each a special characteristic. Some were walking on the sea just as if treading on dry land, and dragons, turtles, and such monsters of the

deep, were listening with bent heads to their words." Others were enjoying the "music of Heaven;" others again "were standing about, each with a vase, or *pâtra* (alms-bowl), or staff, or chowry (fly-brush), in his hand." Some were disrobing, or washing their feet, or sitting absorbed in meditation on the rocks.

The *Hsüan ho hua p'u* gives the titles of one hundred and seven of his pictures in the Imperial collection. Besides religious pictures, there were among these "Wang Wei (poet and painter) Gazing at the Clouds," "Wang Hsi-chih Writing on a Fan," "A Glass Mirror," "Barbarian Horsemen," "Weaving a Palindrome," "The Heavenly Horse" (a copy of Pegasus), "Rocks," etc. etc.

He copied all the pictures by older masters that he could lay his hands on, and carefully stored the copies until he had a very large and representative collection, to which he could always refer. In forming his own style, his endeavour was to reproduce the strong points of each of his exemplars, and it seems to have been universally conceded by native critics that he achieved a marked success. In his own compositions, however, he always managed to introduce some novelties of his own. He painted a Goddess of Mercy "with an exceedingly long girdle, now known as the "Long-girdled Kuan Yin;" also a Kuan Yin reclining on a rock, which was quite a new departure; and again he painted a "Placid Kuan Yin" sitting cross-legged, with fingers interlocked around the knee and a placid expression of countenance. "The world," said he, "thinks that placidity must necessarily be associated with a cross-legged position; but placidity is in the heart, and not on the outside."

The painter and art-critic Mi Fei goes into raptures over a picture by Li, entitled "A Refined Gathering in the West Garden." This work consisted of sixteen of the most eminent men of the day, including both the writer and the artist himself, sitting or standing about amid rocks and water and flowers, dressed in all kinds of fancy costumes, and engaged in various ways. Su Tung-p'o, "garbed as a Taoist priest in yellow robe with black hat, had just taken up his pen to write." His brother, Su Chê, "resting his right hand on a rock and holding a book in his left, was reading." Li Lung-mien was painting a picture

of T'ao Yüan-ming hastening "home again," after his hurried resignation of office. Mi Fei, wearing a cap of the T'ang dynasty and a voluminous robe, was "looking upwards and inditing a eulogy of the rocks." There was a Buddhist priest in cassock, sitting on his prayer-mat and propounding the doctrine of no birth, etc., etc. A few servants completed the picture. Panegyrics on this work were also written by Yang Yü, 1365—1444, and by Wang Shih-chêng, 1526—1593.

The well-known statesman, poet, and calligraphist, Huang T'ing-chien, who said that if a man was commonplace there was no hope for him, was once engaged with some friends in looking at pictures. Among others he produced a work by Li Lung-mien, which seems to have been levelled at the morals of the day. It was entitled "Virtue, farewell!" and the subject was a gambling scene. "There were six or seven gamblers, and one of them had just thrown the dice into the bowl. Five of the dice had settled, but one was still spinning round and round. The gambler who had thrown was leaning over the bowl and shouting out noisily. At the sight of this picture Huang's friends changed colour and rose to their feet, overcome by the masterly way in which the theme had been handled; and they were discussing the great beauties of the work, when Su Tung-p'o happened to come in. He looked at the picture, and said, Li Lung-mien is indeed a master; he can even depict the *patois* of a Fuhkienese. The others were much astonished at these words, and asked him what he meant. Within the Four Seas, answered Su, every one pronounces the word *six* with the lips drawn together; except the Fuhkien man, who opens his mouth wide. Now all the dice in the bowl are sixes, barring the one which has not yet settled. Another six would naturally be called for; what then is the meaning of the open mouth of the man who is shouting? When this story was told to Li Lung-mien, he laughed and said that it was so."

We read that Li "worked at human figures, and was able to deal with the appearance and features of each in such a way that every one saw at a glance what manner of man was intended." Persons from the four quarters of the empire were easily to be distinguished, and so were those of high or of low

estate; "not, as depicted by painters of today, all after the same model, rich, poor, beautiful, ugly, distinguished only by being fat, thin, red, or black." "His pictures were mostly monochromes, and were painted on transparent paper; only in the case of copies of old pictures would he use silk and colours. His brushwork was like clouds passing, or water flowing." "After his death his works became very scarce, being bought up at high prices. This led to much forgery for the sake of gain. He who is not deep in art may be taken in, but such imitations cannot escape the mirror-like skill of the connoisseur."

There is a long list of his chief pictures; among others "Home Again!" a subject inspired by the beautiful poem of T'ao Yüan-ming, A.D. 365—427, who resigned office as magistrate after only eighty-three days' tenure, on the ground that "he could not crook the hinges of his back (to superiors) for only five pecks of rice a day;" also "Illustrations of Filial Piety," "Illustrations of the Nine Songs" (by Ch'ü Yüan of the 4th century B.C.), "Lute and Crane," "Rest and Peace," "Yen Tzü-ling (a Cincinnatus of the Far East) Fishing," "The Lung-mien Hill," "Divining for a Home," "A Tiger on Pegasus" (alluding to the winged horse of Greece, first heard of by the Chinese in the 2nd century B.C.), "A Horse Rolling," "A Red Monkey," "Scratching an Itching Tiger," etc., etc.

Su Tung-p'o has the following appreciation of a picture by Li Lung-mien.

"It has been said that Li Lung-mien painted his "Mountain Village" in order that future wanderers on the hills should easily find their way, striking the right path as though they had seen it in a dream or in a glimpse of a previous birth; also in order that the names of the fountains and rocks and plants and trees along their route should be known to them without the trouble of enquiry; and finally in order that the fishermen and woodcutters of those happy solitudes should be recognised by them without a word being spoken. It has been asked how the artist could force himself to remember all these, and not forget. To this I reply that he who paints the sun like a cake does not forget the sun, neither does a man who is drunk try to drink with his nose nor to grasp with his foot. In all that pertains to

A Landscape, by CHAO LING-JANG (CHAO TA-NIEN).

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The Sung age was one of the few ages of the world which have had the intellectual character we call 'modern.' This is most marked in its conception of landscape. Not till the 19th century in Europe do we find anything like the landscape art of China in the Sung period,—a disinterested love of beauty in nature for its own sake, regardless of associations imposed by the struggles of existence. Europeans till the 19th century looked, with few exceptions, upon mountains as 'horrid crags,' suggestive only of cold discomfort and possible brigands. To the Sung artists and poets, mountains were a passion, as to Wordsworth. The landscape art thus founded, and continued by the Japanese in the 15th century, must rank as the greatest school of landscape which the world has seen. It is the imaginative picturing of what is most elemental and most august in nature,—liberating visions of storm or peace among abrupt peaks, plunging torrents, trembling reed-beds,—and though having a fantastic side for its weakness, can never have the reproach of pretty tameness and mere fidelity which form too often the only ideal of Western landscape. The grandest examples are least amenable to photography. This reproduction is from a painting chosen because showing with its pensive feeling a delicate naturalism which must surprise those acquainted only with the degeneration of China's art; it has the 'intimacy' which we find in the art of men like Corot.

L. B.



Chao Ling-jang or Chao Ta-nien.

our natural organisation we remember without any forcing. Just so Li Lung-mien; when he is on the mountains, he does not concentrate on any one object, but his soul enters into communion with all objects, and his mind penetrates the mysteries of all crafts. Nevertheless, there is both genius and technique to be taken into account. If a man possesses genius, but is ignorant of technique, although things may shape themselves in his mind, they will not take shape from his brush. Now I once watched Li Lung-mien painting a Bôdhisatva. For this he drew entirely upon his imagination, yet none of the Buddhist characteristics were wanting. The words of the Bôdhisatva and the brushwork of the artist seemed to proceed from one single man. How much more then would Li Lung-mien be able to effect this in the case of objects which he had actually seen?"

Chao Ling-jang, better known as Chao Ta-nien, was an Imperial clansman of the House of Sung, a fact which he considered as an obstacle to his unqualified success in art. However, he managed to secure a good education before he turned to painting, and then devoted himself to copying the great masters of the Chin and T'ang dynasties, especially the works of Wang Wei, Li Ssü-hsün, Pi H'ang, and Wei Yen, whose originals, in the two last-mentioned cases, he is said to have surpassed before many months had gone by. The exquisite poetry of Tu Fu is also quoted as another source of his inspiration. Although he never travelled far afield, finding his landscapes in the country around the capital within a radius of less than a hundred miles, his pictures were sure to contain some new impression, some striking treatment. Many of his landscapes were painted on fans, at the back of which the Emperor Chê Tsung, 1085—1100, would inscribe appropriate lines. When he became famous, the demands made upon him were so exhausting that he cried in despair, "This is to be a slave to art!"

Mi Yüan-chang wrote, "Ta-nien's pictures are pure and beautiful; his eyots and his water-fowl are pregnant with expression of river and lake. When in the capital, I obtained a horizontal scroll-picture of his, entitled 'Home Again!' The bamboo fence, the rush hut, the mist-enveloped grove, distant hills and streams—a thousand *li* in a foot of space—sedge and bulrush, egret

and gull,—a perfect riverine scene painted with loving skill.”

Among minor artists of the period, we read of one who was the fifth in descent from father to son, a good instance of heredity; of another who wrote from a distance

I paint the old hills round my home every day,
Lest my soul should forget them, now far far away.

Then there was a third, who flourished about A.D. 1090, a painter of animals, known for his “Hundred Geese,” “Hundred Monkeys,” “Hundred Horses,” “Hundred Oxen,” “Hundred Sheep,” and “Hundred Deer.” Of these pictures we are told that “in spite of the numbers there was no confusion in the composition of each. A fourth made a name by a picture in two panels, one panel showing a boy pointing, and the other a basin of water on which was the reflection of the boy. Thus, “the reality was pointing at the reflection, and the reflection was pointing at the reality.” Sometimes these minor artists are roughly handled by the critics; as when Mi Fei, to whom we are now coming, said of an unfortunate contemporary, “His pictures would defile a teashop or a pothouse.”

Before proceeding, however, there is perhaps one name which deserves for a special reason to be rescued from oblivion. “Ch’êng Tsung-tao was a native of Ch’ang-an, who painted human figures and was also very good at carving stone. All the frescos in Ch’ang-an from the brush of Wu Tao-tzū were copied by him on stone for the purpose of reproduction. His strokes were fine as silken threads or as hairs, and yet he did not lose the spirit or dignity of the originals. His copy of Wu’s picture of “The Three Pure Ones” (the Taoist Trinity), with the attendants right and left, might have been done by Wu himself. Some say that he practised sculpture first, and from that turned to painting.” The writer adds that when copying the works of inferior painters, he succeeded, “by rejecting the shorts and taking the longs,” in producing pictures far better than the originals.

Ou-yang Hsiu, the eminent statesman and historian, A.D. 1007—1072, has a note on the portrait of Wang Yen-chang, a mighty warrior who could ride at full gallop brandishing a heavy iron spear which an ordinary man could not lift, and who died in

922 after a life spent almost entirely on the battlefield. The portrait was discovered at a temple where Ou-yang passed a night, and "being almost invisible from neglect and lapse of time, it was handed to an artist to be restored, but not to be touched up in any way, for fear of losing the likeness." "Already over a hundred years old," he adds, "it will now last for over a hundred more." We are not told who painted this portrait, but to judge from the enthusiasm of one who occupied such a commanding position as Ou-yang Hsiu, it must have exhibited characteristics which we look for in vain among modern works of the kind.

Mi Fei, A.D. 1051—1107, known to the Japanese as Bei-gen-shō from his "style" Yüan-chang, was a native of Kiangsu, whose mother had been in attendance upon the Empress, and who received in consequence a military appointment in Anhui. Summoned to be Court painter, he became a secretary in the Board of Rites, and subsequently went again into the provinces, where he died. He was a monomaniac on the subject of cleanliness, refusing to use towels or plates and bowls which had served for any one else. He spoke of a large and curiously-shaped boulder as "his brother," and altogether he was decidedly eccentric, a fact which considerably interfered with his success in official life. On one occasion, when he was out in a boat with some literary friends, and was shown a specimen of the calligraphy of Wang Hsi-chih (4th century), he became very excited and threatened to jump overboard unless the owner made him a present of it, which the latter was consequently obliged to do. As an artist he excelled, especially in landscape and human figures.

"It was when Li Lung-mien's right hand failed him (from rheumatism)," said he, "that I first began to draw; and it was because Li had so saturated himself with the style of his master, Wu Tao-tzü, and could never quite free himself, that I in my studies of the old masters would never admit a single brush-stroke from Wu."

Two of his pictures are thus described by a critic who saw them. "Across the first paper was a pine-branch, painted in thin ink, its myriad needles massed together as though of iron,

after a style in which I have never seen the pine treated by ancient or modern painter. At the back was this inscription: Wandering with a party of scholars beneath the moon on the banks of the lake, we all agreed to write some verses to a given rhyme. Mi Fei alone produced a poem without words.

On the second paper were sprays of plum and pine-tree, some orchids, and chrysanthemums, intertwining their stalks and leaves, but without confusion. The picture seemed highly elaborated, but when seen close the brush-strokes were found to be few, though never careless ones. A grand, a wonderful work indeed, and a marvel for generations to come!"

Mi Fei was a diligent copyist of the old masters. On one occasion he met a man "who had bought the famous ox-picture by Tai Sung, and he borrowed this for some days in order to take a copy of it. When he came to return it, he could not tell which was the original and which the copy; soon afterwards, however, the owner appeared with what he said was the copy, and asked for the original in exchange. Mi Fei was astounded, and begged to know how he could tell one from the other. In my picture, the owner replied, you can see the herdboys's reflection in the ox's eye, but not in this one."

The writer of the above goes on to tell another story which he considers to be on similar lines. "A Kiangnan man, named Hsü O, produced a painting in which an ox was seen by day eating grass outside a cowhouse, but appeared by night to be lying down inside the cowhouse. This was presented to the last ruler of Shu, and by him was passed on to the Palace. The Emperor T'ai Tsung (976—998) showed it to the Court officials, but no one could explain the phenomenon at all, until a Buddhist priest said, On the southern shores of the Country of Dwarfs (Japan), when the sea ebbs and sandbanks and rocks are exposed, the Dwarfs catch shellfish, in each of which a few drops of liquid are found. This liquid, mixed with paint, will cause any painting to be invisible by day and visible at night." Then follows a farther account of a liquid which acts in an exactly opposite sense, so that the two combined produce the effect described. The priest's explanation is inserted here because this is the first art reference to the Japanese people I have so far come across.

Mi Fei excelled as a calligraphist. On one occasion, the Emperor Hui Tsung instructed him to write a certain inscription, and "when it was completed Mi Fei flung his brush on the ground and shouted out, Now I have washed away the dirty styles of the Two Wangs (Wang Hsi-chih and Wang Hsien-chih, 4th cent. A.D.), and have glorified the great Sung dynasty for ever! The Emperor, who had been secretly watching from behind a screen, forgot his concealment and came hastily forth to admire the beautiful inscription; whereupon Mi Fei prostrated himself on the ground, and begged to be allowed to keep the ink-stone he had used as a souvenir of the occasion. The Emperor granted his request, and Mi Fei hastily placed the ink-stone in the bosom of his robe, the result being that the ink ran off it and made a large stain on his official dress, at which his Majesty roared with laughter."

Mi Fei signed his pictures and calligraphic works in a great variety of ways. For first-class specimens of the latter he had six signatures, which were stamped with a seal of jade, viz. "Hsin Mao Mi Fei (*i. e.* 1051 Mi Fei, alluding to the year of his birth);" "Mi Fei's Seal;" "Seal of the name of Mi Fei;" "Mi Fei seal (the sign of the possessive omitted);" "seal of Mi Fei (whose style is) Yüan-chang;" and "Name of Mi Fei." For his pictures, which rank in Chinese eyes after the more serious business of calligraphy, he mostly used "Seal of the pure pleasures of Mi," and "Seal of the private box of Mi." He was the author of the *Hua Shih*, from which many quotations have been given in the preceding pages. He had a son, named Mi Yu-jen, sometimes called the Younger Mi, who gained some distinction as an artist, and died at a great age.

Ch'êng T'ang distinguished himself as a painter of the bamboo in monochrome. "His favourite variety was the Phoenix-tail Bamboo, the stalks of which are very heavy, and lean over in a curve, while the leaves still sprout as it were backwards. He ascended Mount Omi (in Ssüch'uan) to see the Bôdhisatva Bamboo, around the stalks of which flowers have been thickly trained, so as to produce the appearance of a downy fur; and of this he made a beautiful life-like picture on the wall of the great hall in the Ch'ien-ming temple. From Elephant's Hill he got

drawings of the Bitter Bamboo, Purple Bamboo, Wind Bamboo, and Rain Bamboo, which have been cut on stone by collectors. He also painted some bamboos for a screen in the Kuan Yin temple at Ch'êng-tu, and later on added this inscription, commemorative of a second visit some years later:

It was night, and a Nameless One knocked at the door;
And the priests of the temple were scanning him o'er,
When there on the screen, by the lantern's dull glow,
He showed the bamboos he had drawn long ago."

He also painted vegetables; and in two pictures, dealing with the mustard-plant and the brinjal, "he seemed to have stolen nature's own presentment."

With one rather striking paragraph in reference to Huang Ch'í, a minor artist of the day, we shall pass on to a better known name.

"Huang Ch'í became a recluse, and gave himself up to painting. He produced a picture entitled "Wind, Mist, About-to-Rain," in which there was neither darkness nor light, but an atmosphere like Plum-weather (muggy as in a China May), or like a morning shower which half conceals. It was full of depth, and caused the beholder to call up images out of its indefiniteness, now appearing, now vanishing, without end."

Chou Shun came from the great home of Chinese artists, Ch'êng-tu, the capital of Ssüch'uan; but he drifted into Hupeh, and lived there so long that he considered himself almost a native of that province. He began life as a novice at a Buddhist temple, and at twenty reached the metropolis, where by his poetry and painting, both of a religious character, he soon made a name. There he became intimate with many notables, especially with the Governor, in whose fall (circa 1150) he was mixed up, and was banished for life to Hui-chou in Kuangtung. Powerful friends, however, interceded for him, on the ground of his skill as a painter, and he was allowed to return. "In landscape he modelled his style upon Li Ssü-hsün; for clothes and hats he went to the works of Ku K'ai-chih; and for Buddhist figures to Li Lung-mien. He also painted flowers, birds, pine-trees, bamboos, oxen, and horses, in all their manifold phases, and with extreme lucidity in every case. Painters of human figures spoil

nine pictures for every one they complete, first sketching in with crayon, and then altering over and over again. Not so Chou Shun. He took up his brush once and for all, and the result was rhythm and life. He often said, Writing and painting are one and the same art; and who ever saw a good writer begin by making a sketch? Before his friend the Governor fell, it chanced that a number of high officials were together, and among them one named Shêng. This Shêng said to Chou Shun, Could you paint me a picture of a plum-tree in bloom?—from which

You may know that the white is not snow on the trees
By a delicate perfume which comes on the breeze.

The lines you quote, replied Chou, are by Lin-ch'uan; and if you could write verses like those, I could paint you the picture you want. Shêng was furious; and when later on he became Governor in place of Chou's patron, he took care that Chou should feel the full effect of his resentment."

The Emperor Hui Tsung (*Japanese* Kisō Kōtei) came to the throne in the year 1100. It is not necessary to dwell upon his disastrous reign, and his death among the Nü-chên Tartars in 1135. He was an accomplished man, and exceedingly fond of collecting rare and curious objects. He may or may not have been an artist. In the British Museum there is a picture of a white falcon, which, according to Mr. Binyon has been wrongly attributed to him.

"At the back of a picture of some bamboos and birds painted by the Emperor Hui Tsung of the Sung dynasty, Chao Mêng-fu (the painter) inscribed these words: What joy for trivial things to be limned by a hand that is divine!"

Mention is also made of six rocks gracefully drawn by his Majesty in monochrome, after the style, so it is said, of Wu Tao-tzŭ; and T'ang Hou, in his *Hua chien*, declares that his flowers, birds, rocks, and human figures, were decidedly in the second or "Wonderful" class.

This Emperor signalled the first year of his reign by establishing an Imperial Academy of Calligraphy and Painting, and in order to collect the best available talent he circulated an edict far and wide that a competition would be held for the

election of a number of artists, success to depend upon the interpretation of certain lines of ancient poetry. "One line was

The bamboos envelop the inn by the bridge

and as this was a theme capable of expression by form, the competitors unanimously devoted their energies to the elaboration of the inn. One of them, however, who was a real artist, merely allowed the sign of the inn, with the usual word *Spirits* written on it, to peep through the bamboos, thus suggesting the establishment behind."

"Another line was

The hoof of his steed comes back heavily charged with the scent of the
trampled flowers.

"But as the idea here could not be expressed by form, the problem was more difficult of solution. Again, however, a clever artist rose to the occasion. He simply painted a cluster of butterflies following at a horse's heels, evidence enough of the attraction there was. Both these two candidates were successful; for in an art examination it is originality of thought which places one man above another, just as in an ordinary examination it is superiority of literary talent. And although the two tests were not by any means calculated to produce identical results, still they both offered to men of originality a chance to separate themselves from their less-favoured colleagues."

A work which has the singular title of "Chats over Lice-catching" contains a similar story.

"Two lines from a poem of the T'ang dynasty were once set as a test to a company of painters. The lines ran thus:

Some tender sprays of budding green, with a tiny splash of red,—
A little goes a long way to put spring thoughts in one's head.

"All the painters sought for their interpretations in plants and in hints of the pink blossoms of spring, and all failed alike, with the single exception of one artist, who produced the picture of a kiosk on a cliff, faintly seen in a setting of green willows, with a beautiful girl (dressed according to custom in red) standing up and leaning on the balustrade. The others admitted their defeat, for such a picture may really be said to interpret the

thought of the poet." The chief point in the story is that "spring thoughts" convey in Chinese the same idea as Tennyson's famous line,

In the Spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love.

On another occasion the Emperor bade a number of aspirants paint a peacock in the act of mounting a block of stone, placed especially for the purpose of allowing the bird to show off its tail to advantage. Every one of the artists made his bird stepping up with the right foot first, but his Majesty pointed out that peacocks always start with the left foot, and forthwith adjourned to the garden, where the statement was verified.

The Academy of Painting (*T'u Hua Yüan*), mentioned above, seems to have evoked some dissatisfaction from time to time. One writer says that its members were often chosen, not so much for their skill with the brush as for their own personal recommendations. He also says that the blight on the whole system was insistence upon a formal resemblance. On the other hand, he mentions a strong movement in favour of originality, and describes one special picture which very much took his fancy, but without giving the artist's name. "A wing of a palace, with a brilliantly decorated verandah, in which was a red door half opened, and a young lady of the harem leaning out and holding in her hand a dish piled up with fruit-skins, which she is in the act of throwing away. The fruits were ducks'-feet(?), lichees, walnuts, chestnuts, hazel-nuts, etc., all of which were separate and easily distinguishable one from the other."

We finally hear of the Academy under the Ming dynasty. The original system of examination had then long fallen into desuetude, and the institution was evidently on its last legs; for, so we are told, "the fineness of its art productions was far removed from that of ancient days."

Wang Tao-hêng began to paint at the early age of seven, and finally adopting art as a profession, he competed about A.D. 1109 for admission to the Imperial Academy. The theme set was "A Butterfly-dream of a Distant Home; a Nightjar on the Bough, under the Moon, at Midnight." The "butterfly" refers to the passage in *Chuang Tzŭ*, where the writer dreams he is

a butterfly, and wakes to uncertainty whether he may not now be a butterfly dreaming it is a man. The nightjar is believed to cry all night, until its throat bleeds, calling its mate to come home. Wang's treatment was as follows. He painted Su Wu, the great patriot who was kept in captivity by the Huns from B.C. 100 to 81, and set to tend sheep upon the steppes of Tartary, "lying on the ground wrapped in felt and pillowed on a log, while two butterflies fluttered over his head. He further painted a forest with wide-spreading branches, with a nightjar on one of them, and the moon shining in the midst, and throwing the shadow of the trees on the ground. He came out at the top of the list, and by the Emperor's commands he received the appointment of Court painter."

About the year 1120 a call was made for skilled painters to decorate the walls of a newly-built palace; and when these had been selected, a dead set was made by the general body against one of their number, named Ho Chên. The wall of a lecture-room, quite unsuitable for a fresco, was assigned to him as his share. He did not demur, but amused himself by getting tipsy until the others had finished. He then screened off the wall and dismissed his apprentices; and within a few days he was able to exhibit a picture, eight feet in height, of a forest heavily laden with snow. "He used frequently to collaborate with a brother artist named Jen An; and on one occasion the latter, thinking to corner his colleague, started a picture by painting, right across the middle, a number of belvederes, pavilions, kiosques, etc., etc. To this Ho Chên replied by simply running a riverbank along the lower half of the picture, while in the upper portion he painted hills and peaks, range above range, rising from the tops of the buildings below. The attempt to corner was thus foiled."

In 1120 a minor painter, named Chên Yao-chên, was sent to Peking to paint a portrait of the last Emperor of the Liao dynasty, who had his capital there. Two pupils went along with him, and they brought back views of the scenery by the way. Another minor painter, Ssü-ma K'ou, greatly astonished people by a picture of heavenly beings up in the sky, their bodies down to the waist projecting from clouds. Another made dogs

Rose-Mallow, by LI TI.

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As in landscape, so in the painting of isolated subjects from nature—flower and bird, or both combined—the Sung artists are pre-eminent. We shall look in vain in European art for anything approaching the imaginative completeness with which they treated such themes. The studies of plant and flower by Leonardo and by Dürer are marvels of beautiful mastery, but they remain studies, inspired by the wide curiosity and intellectual interest of those men. But with the great Chinese, a blossoming spray, subtly relieved and enhanced by the spacing of the design—the vacant space being as much a factor in its beauty as the thing drawn—becomes the subject of a masterpiece. It is not only a question of arrangement and colour, though in these the Sung artists are unsurpassed, but of a radically different view of the world from that pervading the mind of Europe. Sensitiveness to natural beauty, combined with a sort of reverential tenderness for the life of things, inspired an art which concerned itself with things as they grow and exist for themselves, not as detached from their own life for the use of man. Flowers are not regarded as botanical specimens nor even as an ornament for rooms, cut and placed in pots, but as a symbol of the infinite life of nature, putting forth their tender petals that tremble as the stalks bend to the wind. This Rose-Mallow is a lovely example. Another painting of the period is still more typical; along the upper border, hanging from out of sight, are peony-blossoms; below, water reflects a blossom that is beyond the picture; thus a whole world is hinted at. The same principle pervades Chinese poetry: "the words stop short, the sense goes on."

L. B.



Li Ti.

his speciality. We also find the butterfly-dream story, retold in connection with quite a different artist, named Chan Tê-shun. There was one painter who excelled in insects, and who paid boys to catch them for him, so that he might study them from life. Another simply splashed a wall with ink, and then from the splashes evolved his design.

Chao Tzŭ-yün is disposed of almost in a line. "He could produce a picture by a single brush-stroke. In painting faces and hands, he was careful enough, but would dispose of draperies as if he were a calligraphist, by one stroke." He must have flourished about A.D. 1150.

From an account of another artist we learn that "Drawing the bamboo is like hand-writing; it may be clear, but it must not be commonplace. Drawing a plum-tree is like judging a horse; the essential is not shape, but anatomy."

Li T'ang, known to the Japanese as Ri-tō, was a painter of landscape and also of human figures, who flourished under the Emperor Hui Tsung, 1100—1126, and was appointed an Academician. During the political troubles of the close of the above reign, he retired from Court, but subsequently became a great favourite with the Emperor Kao Tsung, who said, punningly, Li T'ang may well be compared with T'ang Li,—meaning Li Ssü-hsün of the T'ang dynasty. Li T'ang painted up to the age of eighty; "his conceptions were by no means commonplace."

Li Ti was a native of Ho-yang in Yünnan, who in 1119 took up an appointment in the Imperial Academy of Painting, of which, some five and twenty years later, he became Assistant Director, receiving from the Emperor the gift of a golden girdle. He excelled as a painter of flowers, birds, bamboos, rocks, and dogs. His landscapes, however, were not generally considered to be of first-class merit.

The famous scholar and philosopher, Chu Hsi, 1130—1200, whose interpretations of the Classics are still obligatory at the public examinations in China, is said to have painted his own portrait, which was engraved at Hui-chou in Anhui. He also wrote an interesting account of a portrait painted for him by a minor artist of the day.

"It has always been considered first-class work in portrait

painting, even for the most skilful artist, when the result is a likeness, more or less exact, of the mere features. Such skill is now possessed by Kuo Kung-ch'ên; but what is still more marvellous, he catches the very expression, and reproduces, as it were, the inmost mind of his model.

"I had already heard much of him from a couple of friends; however, on my sending for him, he did not make his appearance until this year. Thereupon, a number of the gentlemen of the neighbourhood set themselves to test his skill. Sometimes the portrait would be perfect; sometimes perhaps a little less so; but in all cases a marked likeness was obtained, and in point of expression of individual character the artist showed powers of a very high order.

"I myself sat for two portraits, one large and the other small; and it was quite a joke to see how accurately he reproduced my coarse, ugly face and my vulgar, rustic turn of mind, so that even those who had only heard of, but had never seen me, knew at once for whom the portraits were intended.

"I was just then about to start on my travels,—eastwards, to the confines of Shantung; westwards, to the turbid waters of the Tung-t'ing Lake; northwards, to the quiet home of the old recluse, T'ao Yüan-ming;—after which I contemplated retirement from public life. And I thought how much I should like to bring back with me portraits of the various great and good, but unknown men I might be fortunate enough to meet with on the way. But Kuo's parents were old, and he could not venture upon such a long journey, for which I felt very sorry. So at parting, I gave him this document."

A voluminous writer, named Hu Ch'üan, who died in 1172, writes as follows. "There is no branch of painting so difficult as portrait-painting. It is not that reproduction of the features is difficult; the difficulty lies in painting the springs of action hidden in the heart. The face of a great man may resemble that of a mean man, but their hearts will not be alike. Therefore, to paint a likeness which does not exhibit these heart-impulses, leaving it an open question whether the sitter is a great man or a mean man, is to be unskilled in the art of portraiture."

Ch'ên Fu-liang, a statesman and writer who died in 1202, mentions the portraits of seven generations of ancestors, possessed by a friend of his. "To look upon these faces," he said, "was like looking at living men."

The two following paragraphs should be read in connection with the note on Yen Hui of the Yüan dynasty (see *post*).

Ma Yüan (*Japanese* Ba-yen) flourished as a Court painter between 1190 and 1224. "In landscape, human figures, flowers, and birds, he was very successful, and stood first of the Academicians." He had an elder brother, Ma K'uei, which name Anderson misreads Ma Tah (*Japanese* Ba-tatsu), who excelled him in painting birds, but "in other subjects did not come up to him;" and also a son, Ma Lin, who "was able to carry on the family tradition, but was a long way behind his father."

Hsia Kuei (*Japanese* Ka-kei) was a native of Ch'ien-t'ang, and served in the Han-lin College under the Emperor Ning Tsung (1194—1224), being decorated with the order of the Golden Girdle. "He painted human figures of all sorts and conditions. His monochromes seemed to be coloured; his brushwork was virile; and his ink was as though dripped on,—truly very wonderful. For his snow scenery he went to the works of Fan K'uan; and in landscape, no Academician since Li T'ang has come out on his right hand."

There is, however, another opinion of these two artists which, in view of what is to follow, should perhaps be inserted here.

A painter named Kuo Shun, who flourished A.D. 1425, hearing Ma Yüan and Hsia Kuei discussed in his presence, cried out, "Rotten rocks and dirty water, what have I to do with these sweepings of the Sung dynasty?"

Wang Shih-chêng, 1526—1593, has a note on a picture by Hsia Kuei, entitled "Ten thousand *li* of the Yang-tsze," which he saw at the house of a friend. He compares it with a similar work of the same title by Huang Kung-wang, which was actually in his own possession, and finds that both are equally wonderful and equally beautiful. The scenery depicted extends in both cases from Wu-ch'ang, opposite to Hankow, in Hupeh, right into Ssüch'uan, thus embracing the scenery of the magnificent gorges near I-ch'ang.

The following passage is from a work entitled *Yen ch'i yu shih*, quoted in the *T'u shu*. "The artists of modern times who taught painting in a prescribed space, were Ma Yüan and Hsia Kuei. They were both descendants of wild men, by which is meant the inhabitants of Western countries (*hsi yü*)." This means that whereas it had always been customary to paint scenery from right to left on a scroll which only came to an end with the fancy of the artist, the above two painters encouraged what is known as *chieh hua* or "boundary painting," *i. e.* putting a landscape into a given space.

Chêng Ssü-hsiao was famous for painting orchids. He produced one horizontal scroll of over ten feet in length by only five inches in depth. When he was living in retirement, after having taken a high degree, the local official, who had heard of his skill, and also that he would not readily part with his pictures, arrested him on the ground that he had not discharged certain obligations to the State. "You may have my head," roared Chêng to the astonished magistrate, "but you shall not have my orchids." Thereupon he was released. To judge by the following lines of his, he seems to have had a good opinion of his powers:

The clear breeze sweeps by and is gone past recall,
The clouds of the evening are gathered in vain;
But the scent of the springtime which lurks in the bud, —
My palette and brush can diffuse it again.

Yang Jih-yen first attracted notice by his magnificent calligraphy, which was said to "catch up and rival that of the masters of old." He was further a clever portrait-painter; and when all the Court artists had failed to turn out a likeness of the much-beloved Empress Dowager, he was summoned to the task. "He had hardly used his brush when those who were standing around looking on, all raised their hands to their foreheads; and by and by they began to weep, so impressed were they by the extraordinarily lifelike expression of the portrait."

T'ung Kuan (died A.D. 1126) was a eunuch who raised himself by craft to be Commander-in-chief of the army on the western frontier, and Governor of several provinces. But he collapsed before the Chin Tartars, and was put to death on his way to

his place of banishment. He was a clever painter of battles, especially those of the great general Chu-ko Liang in the wars of the Three Kingdoms, 3rd century A.D. He painted these in parts which could be put together, so as to form an effective whole.

Liu Yüan as an artist was nothing more than a pleasing painter of "clouds, forests, fountains, and rocks." But he has other claims to notice. "He was an exceedingly grave and dignified man. His life was from first to last without blemish. His contemporaries say that during over fifty years of official life, he never betrayed either joy or anger upon his face. His father took a deep interest in calligraphy and painting, and possessed an immense collection of specimens, with their ivory labels and jade rollers, all arranged in order. From the Chin (3rd century), Wei, Sui, and T'ang dynasties downwards, not a single noteworthy calligraphist or painter was unrepresented. It was thus possible for Liu Yüan to decide by comparison on what was genuine and what was forged, to determine the age of a work, and to assign to each artist his proper chronological position; the result being that he became quite an authority on calligraphy and painting, and whenever any one obtained a picture about which there was any uncertainty, Liu Yüan's services were always called into requisition. And although he might not be able to come to any definite decision, what he did say was sure to have considerable bearing upon the subject."

Several artists are here mentioned who combined painting with wood-carving; in one case metal-carving or chasing, and modelling, are also included.

Chao Kuang had been employed as secretary in the family of Li Lung-mien, and had often attended upon the great painter when the latter was at work. He thus managed to pick up some notion of the art, and was said to paint horses which could hardly be distinguished from those of the Master. "About the year 1130 he was captured by brigands, who seem to have heard of his skill, for he was at once ordered to paint the portrait of a lady captive. Chao declared that he was unable to do so, and would not yield, though threatened with a sword. The brigands then cut off the thumb of his right hand, and let him go. Chao Kuang, however, was left-handed."

The end of the great Sung dynasty is now in sight, so far as chronological arrangement is concerned. During the latter part of the 12th century and the first half of the 13th, art cannot be said to have flourished. The Mongols were slowly but surely overwhelming the adherents of the House of Sung, their onward course liberally marked by all the horrors of war. For us, however, there still remain a few artists who should have been dealt with before this, but for the Chinese system of lumping together Taoist and Buddhist priests, necromancers, physiognomists, women of all sorts, and other strange persons who happened to paint above the average, in a section all to themselves at the end of the dynasty. Of these last it will only be necessary to deal with one or two.

The name of the Buddhist priest Chü Jan is mentioned several times in the course of this work as that of a distinguished artist. He was a native of the Southern T'ang State, and took the vows at a local monastery, where he set himself to study landscape, choosing the works of Tung Yüan as his models. When the ruler of this State finally submitted to the House of Sung, A.D. 975, he carried the painter Chü Jan with him to the capital, and there the latter established himself, taking up his abode at the K'ai-pao Monastery, where he painted a very beautiful picture on the wall of the library, entitled "Mountain Peaks in Morning Mists."

The *Hsüan ho hua p'u* gives the titles of one hundred and thirty-six of his pictures, all landscapes, in the Imperial collection of the 12th cent.

"In the family of Ts'ai T'ing (an official who died in 1079), two landscape scrolls by Chü Jan are preserved. There is a hoary mountain peak with precipitous cliffs, the anatomy of which is beautifully defined; and on the wooded slopes below are many boulders peeping out from the pines and undergrowth which now conceal, now leave them exposed. At one side is a path, leading far up the mountain side to a shady Retreat, quite in keeping with the wild repose of the scenery."

His pictures were never easy to obtain. We are told by a later writer that they "were mostly frescos or were stored in temples, and the public could not get them."

Yüan Ai was a Buddhist priest who was brought to the capital as a child, and subsequently took the vows. "He made himself thoroughly acquainted with the ancient art of physiognomy, and thus became able to draw portraits. The founder of the dynasty, 968—976, hearing of his fame, sent for him to take the Imperial likeness. At that moment his Majesty was just back from enjoying the spring in the garden behind the Palace. He was wearing a black cap, in which some flowers had been stuck, and a joyous expression overspread his naturally beautiful face. Almost with a sweep of his brush, Yüan Ai completed his work; there was no delay. The Emperor rewarded him handsomely, and henceforth all the notables struggled to get a picture from him." One day the Emperor said to him, "Can you paint your own portrait?" Yüan Ai replied that he could, and forth-with produced a picture which his Majesty said was a capital likeness.

The following story is told of his skill. "Yüan Ai was on one occasion painting in the Imperial Gallery, when the eunuchs who stood round to watch noticed that so soon as he had finished colouring a picture he would draw forth from his robe a stone, with which he rubbed over all the flesh. This gave the flesh a very natural appearance, such as no other painter could obtain. By and by, when he had just used the stone, he saw a little eunuch pick it up and run away. He soon made the boy bring it back; upon which the latter called him several bad names, and disappeared. None of the bystanders would give the boy's name, so Yüan Ai simply drew a likeness of him, and went to complain to the official in charge. I can do nothing, said the official, unless you give me the offender's name; whereupon Yüan Ai handed him the head he had sketched. Why, that's little Yang, cried the official; how ever did you take a likeness like that, considering the fluster you were in?" Of course little Yang received his deserts, and Yüan Ai's reputation went up by leaps and bounds.

There was a Chinese painter, known to the Japanese as Mokkei. Anderson calls him Muh Ki, and styles him "one of the leading artists of the dynasty. His favourite subjects were dragons, tigers, monkeys, storks, and wild ducks; but he also painted figures and landscapes" (*Catalogue of Japanese and Chinese Paintings*,

p. 486). Further on, p. 517, he says that Muh Ki "was regarded with the utmost veneration by the Japanese artists of the Renaissance." On the strength of this, Anderson has attributed to him a pair of eagles, Nos. 9 and 10 in the Catalogue, which he describes as "vigorously sketched in the style of the Sung dynasty," and one of which is reproduced in this work, with a note by Mr. Binyon, to which the reader is referred.

Here is what the Chinese have to tell us about this "leading artist" of the Sung dynasty. "The Buddhist priest Fa Ch'ang, whose fancy name was Mu Ch'í, painted dragons, tigers, monkeys, cranes, wild geese, landscape, and human figures. He threw these off as fancy dictated, complete in a few strokes. His conceptions were terse and without display of ornament; yet they were coarse and repellent, truly unrefined and unpleasing."

T'ang Hou of the Yüan dynasty says in his *Hua chien*, "In recent times Mu Ch'í, the Buddhist priest Fa Ch'ang, indulged in vagaries in monochrome; but his pictures are coarse and displeasing, without a trace of the archaic in their composition." For further enlightenment, the reader is referred to the magnificent tiger by Mu Ch'í, here reproduced, and to Mr. Binyon's note attached.

Another Buddhist priest, named Fa Nêg, is remarkable for having painted the Five Hundred Lohans, who form the great body of Buddha's disciples, all in one picture. It is said to have taken him many years, but no further details are forthcoming.

Seventeen women are mentioned as having distinguished themselves in art under this dynasty, evidently in a small way. However, the great critic and painter, Mi Fei, does not disdain to praise a Miss Li, who became the wife of a high official, named Wang, for her trees, bamboos, and rocks. Another lady is mentioned as having been able to draw a chessboard accurately without the aid of a ruler.

The Sung dynasty produced a number of voluminous writers on art. Han Cho for instance, himself a minor artist, wrote a work on various phases of landscape-drawing. He showed that among the mountains in a landscape there should always be a "host," or large and lofty peak, dominating the "guests" or lesser peaks. He showed that water may be divided under four heads, slow-moving, quick-moving, shallow, and deep, with similar

Tiger, by MU CH'I (MUH-KI, Jap. Mokkei).

In the collection of Arthur Morrison, esq.

In Chinese art the Tiger is not merely a wild animal, but one of those great traditional symbols the meaning of which is fluid rather than fixed, acquiring new phases of significance in the fluctuations of a nation's mind. It is usually painted as a pendant to the Dragon, and seems to stand for the elemental force and rages of nature opposed to the infinite soul; 'the tiger roaring his incessant challenge to the unknown terror of the spirit' (Okakura, 'Ideals of the East'). With this symbolism in mind we can afford to waive the claims of naturalism, and accept the artist's conception, portraying certainly a beast that is alive and fearful with all the tiger's sullen and boundless fury, compressed in the slow drag of the contracting body, the laid-back ears, the quivering tail. The glimpse of wild rainy landscape, tossing boughs and leaping torrent, is full of the Sung character.

L. B.



Mu Ch'ü.

remarks on trees and rocks. He further discussed clouds, mist, sunsets, wind, rain, human figures, bridges, cities, temples, boats, and even "composition" and the proper method of looking at pictures. He says that the first points to be noted in a picture are its inspiration and its rhythm, after which style and brush-work may come in for a share of attention.

"When the Sung dynasty was at the height of its glory," says one writer, "the roads were thronged with men of foreign nations coming to Court. Of all these the most cultured and refined were the Koreans, who were gradually yielding to the influences of the Flowery Land. In matters of manual skill there was no other people to be compared with them, and they were remarkably proficient in painting. At one house I saw a coloured landscape in four rolls; and at another, two rolls containing pictures of the eight ancient worthies of Korea; while elsewhere I saw a picture on fine calico of the Heavenly Kings, all being works of considerable excellence. In 1074 a Korean envoy arrived, bringing tribute, and also bent upon obtaining specimens of Chinese calligraphy and painting. He bought up a good many of these, with not more than ten to twenty per cent of inferior works, and paid in some cases as much as 300 ounces of silver. In the winter of 1076 another envoy was sent with tribute; and being about to take back with him several painters, he begged leave to be allowed to copy the frescos in the Hsiang-kuo Temple. This he was permitted to do, and carried away with him copies of all the frescos, the men he employed being fairly skilled in the art. When these envoys came to China they used at their private audiences folding fans made of duck[']s egg blue paper, on which were painted pictures of their national heroes, men, women, horses, landscape, lotus-flowers, tree-birds and water-fowl, all very cleverly done. Patches of silver were also used for clouds and the moon, with very charming effect. They called the fans their Dwarf fans, because the fans came originally from the Dwarf Nation (Japan)."

Ou-yang Hsiu, 1007—1072, in a short note on painting, pointed out that physical states or conditions were more easily rendered than mental states or conditions. "Thus, flying and walking, quickly or slowly, are shallow ideas and may readily be brought

out; but it is a much more difficult matter to present ideas of leisure, harmony, severity, or quiet, which are of a deeper character."

A writer on the art of the 10th century says, "There are six essentials in painting: strength, rhythm, thought, detail, brush-work, and colouring." These must not be confused with the Six Canons of Hsieh Ho.

The *T'u hua chien wên lu*, by Kuo Jo-hsü, contains many interesting notes on various branches of art, with long lists of painters and the lines in which they excelled. It is pointed out in this work that the old masters invested their women with dignity as well as grace, "which won respect from men; whereas, the painters of today only aim at beauty of feature, in order to please the public eye." There is an article on the "Eight Steeds of Mu Wang," in which we are told that the Emperor Wu Ti of the Han dynasty, who reigned B.C. 146—86, possessed an original painting of these wonderful animals which could travel a thousand miles a day, and carried their master far into Central Asia in the tenth century before Christ. The picture, then nearly eight hundred years old, is said "to have been painted on yellow silk; the flesh was destroyed or indistinct, but the general anatomy of the animals was still visible, showing a graceful and wonderful shape, like that of dragons." A copy of this picture was made and handed down through various dynasties, until at length it was bought (about A.D. 610) for the Imperial Gallery, the price given being "colts to the number of forty hoofs, and fine brocade to the amount of fifty pieces." About A.D. 640, copies of this work were put into general circulation. There is also a detailed and slightly varying account of Huang Ch'üan's picture of the six cranes, already mentioned. "The first was called Sky-screamer; with raised head and opened beak it was uttering a cry. The second was called Signal-giver; with head turned about and outstretched neck it was watching. The third was called Lichen-pecker; with head bent down it was pecking on the ground. The fourth was called Wind-dancer; riding on the wind it was flapping its feathers and dancing. The fifth was called Feather-preener; with neck turned round it was smoothing out its plumage. The sixth was called Step-watcher; while ad-

vancing it turned its head and looked down." Mention too is made of the Koreans as being a cultured people, fond of art and of painting pictures on fine cloth.

The *Hsüan ho hua p'u* is an important work, the author of which is unknown. It gives a list of two hundred and thirty-one painters and the titles of six thousand one hundred and ninety-two of their pictures, all in the Imperial collection during the Hsüan-ho period, 1119—1126. The artists are classified each under one of the following ten headings, supposed to represent the line in which each particularly excelled. (1) Taoism and Buddhism, (2) Human Figures, (3) Buildings, (4) Barbarians, including their Animals, (5) Dragons and Fishes, (6) Landscape, (7) Animals, (8) Flowers and Birds, (9) The Bamboo, (10) Vegetables and Fruits. This work has been freely quoted in the foregoing pages; it is now only necessary to add that in the collection appear three Japanese pictures, namely "Rocks in a Gale," and two entitled "Manners and Customs." The painters' names are not given.

The *Hua shih* by Mi Fei, 1051—1107, has frequently been quoted above. It is an interesting gossip book, full of miscellaneous items on pictures, how to repair them and generally care for them, what his friends had in their collections and entries of exchanges effected, hints to guide purchasers to detect forgeries, remarks on paper, silk, etc. etc.

The *Hua p'in* by Li Chih, 11th and 12th cent., is a professedly critical work, written by an eminent literary man who earned the encouragement and approbation of Su Tung-p'o. Various important pictures are discussed, and their merits and defects are freely pointed out; there are also many curious notes on collateral topics. "The old masters, such as Ts'ao Pu-hsing, are far removed from us; Wu Tao-tzū is an artist of comparatively recent date, and yet it is impossible to get hold of a single example of his work. How much more difficult then must it not be to obtain works by Ku K'ai-chih or Lu T'an-wei? Therefore in discussing pictures, the standard should be taken from those one has seen. If, in the craze for old masters, we say, This is by Ku, that is by Lu, we not only deceive people but ourselves as well."

"The colour of old pictures is black, resulting from deposits

of dirt over the original thin wash of ink. Sometimes the picture is pleasantly impregnated with some ancient perfume. Faked pictures are mostly made up yellow, but this colour is easily distinguishable from the dark hue caused by dirt."

"No more than three or four pictures by eminent artists should ever be hung in one room. After these have been enjoyed for four or five days, others should be substituted. All pictures should occasionally be brought into the open air, and on no account be exposed to smoke or damp. If they are exhibited in turn, they will not collect the dust and dirt, and what is more, you will not get tired of looking at them. Great care must be exercised in unrolling and rolling them up; and when they are brought out, they should be lightly flicked over the surface with a horse-tail or a silk flapper; coir brushes must on no account be used."

"If the personages in a picture, when you look at them, seem to speak; if flowers and fruit are swayed by the wind and sparkle with dew; if birds and beasts seem as if they were alive; if hills and streams and forests and fountains are limpid, reposeful, dark, and distant; if buildings have depth; if bridges have movement to and fro; if the base of a hill can be seen below the surface of the clear water at its foot; and if the sources of the water are made obvious and distinct;—then, though his name may not be known, the man who paints such pictures is a great artist.

"But if the personages resemble corpses or clay images; if the flowers and fruit look artificial; if the birds and beasts are like, only so far as plumage and fur; if the characteristics of the landscape are blurred and indistinct; if the buildings are out of proportion; if the bridges are out of drawing; if the foot of the hill rests on the top of the water; and if the streams have no apparent source;—pictures with such faults as these may be set aside as of no account."

In another place, this writer warns painters not to make their pictures look like prints; he also tells us that Kuo Hsi signed his pictures in the corner with a small seal bearing the character for Hsi; that I Yüan-chi always signed his on a boulder, etc., etc.

Such are a few of the leading works on art produced under the Sung dynasty. There are many others; as for instance one devoted entirely to painting the plum-tree, by a priest of this dynasty, which of course is only for specialists in that line. Enough has perhaps been given to show what a wealth of information was at the disposal of Japanese artists who derived their earliest knowledge of the pictorial art from China.

The *Hua chi*, by Têng Ch'un, which has already been quoted, contains lists of artists and pictures, and also some desultory notes.

"In India, at the temple of Nalanda, the priests paint many Buddhas, Bôdhisatvas, and Lohans, using the linen of the West. The features of their Buddhas are very different from Chinese features; the eyes are larger and the mouths and ears are curiously shaped; the figures wear girdles and have the right shoulder bare, and are either in sitting or standing attitudes. The artist begins by drawing the heart, liver, stomach, lungs, and kidneys, at the back of the pictures; on the other side he paints the figure in colours, using gold or vermilion as a ground. They object to ox-glue as too noticeable, and take the gum from peach-trees mixed with the juice of the willow, which is very strong and clear, but quite unknown in China."

The Tartar dynasties, which swayed the northern portions of China, and also Manchuria and Mongolia, contemporaneously with the House of Sung, may be disposed of in a few lines.

In A.D. 1053, the Emperor Hsing Tsung of the Liao dynasty summoned his Prime Minister and said, "We and the Sung Emperor are brothers, and have been on good terms now for many years. Tell the Sung ambassador that I wish to have his Majesty's portrait."

When Akuteng, the first Emperor of the Nü-chên dynasty, captured Peking from the Liao Tartars in 1122, he visited the Imperial gallery of pictures. Turning to an officer, he enquired of what use the pictures were. "To amuse his Majesty," replied the officer. "In that case," said Akuteng, "it were better to amuse many than one," and he forthwith ordered that the pictures should be sent to a tea-shop outside the Tung-hua Gate.

These Nü-chên Tartars, who ruled from 1115 to 1234, have

between forty and fifty painters to their credit, but among these there does not appear to be any artist of mark.

Chang Yung-shun perhaps deserves a passing notice for his careful studies of wild geese, "which," as a friend remarked, "are not at all like the ordinary representations one sees." "They show us," he added, "how night after night you must have dreamed by river and lake, and have gently broken the reeds in the cold water of the foreshore."

Watering Horses. Copied from CHAO MÊNG-FU,
by a Japanese artist.

In the British Museum.

Copies in Eastern art are usually more or less free: but doubtless the rhythmical design of Chao Mêng-fu, one of the greatest artists of the Yüan dynasty, is reproduced in this attractive light-coloured painting. The master was celebrated for his pictures of horses. His actual brushwork, of incomparable delicacy and power, is seen in the landscape roll, also in the possession of the British Museum, a fragment of which is reproduced in this book.

L. B.



Chao Mèng-fu.

CHAPTER VI

A. D. 1260—1368

The Mongols

We do not find any very great names in the opening years of the Yüan or Mongol dynasty, which is represented by something over four hundred artists in all. The Mongols cannot be said to have been firmly or finally established until the year 1260, when Kublai Khan was proclaimed Emperor at Xanadu (= the capital), some 180 miles north of Peking. Near about this date, actually in 1254, was born Chao Mêng-fu, sometimes known as the Apostle of Pine-trees and Snow. He was a lineal descendant of the founder of the Sung dynasty, and an hereditary official. Upon the fall of the House of Sung he retired into private life until 1286, when he was summoned to Court, and was appointed secretary in the Board of War. By 1316 he had risen to a high post in the Han-lin College, and was much esteemed by the Emperor, who always addressed him by his style, Tzŭ-ang, instead of using his official name, Mêng-fu.

"As a calligraphist, his name was known all over the Empire; and his pictures of scenery, trees, rocks, flowers, bamboos, people, and horses, were exceedingly delicate and refined." One writer says, "His pictures were all delightful; his highest efforts reached the gods." In early life we are told that "he did not give much attention to painting; but when with friends, he would take a sheet of paper and amuse himself by producing trees or rocks as called for." Critics have claimed for him a rank above Ts'ao Fu-hsing and Han Kan of old, and even above Li Lung-mien. One writer says, "He had all the suggestiveness of the T'ang period (618—905), without its elaboration; all the masculinity

of the Northern Sung period (960—1127), without its lack of restraint."

There is a fine landscape roll by Chao in the British Museum, measuring about twenty feet in length by two feet in depth.

Kao K'o-kung was by descent a native of Central Asia. We first hear of him in 1275 as an official, and ultimately as President of the Board of Punishments. Attracted to painting by natural inclination and endowment, he formed his style at first upon the works of Mi Fei and Mi Yu-jen, but later on he turned to Li Ch'êng, Tung Yüan, and Chü Jan. His chief lines were landscape and bamboo studies in ink.

"Kao would not lightly take up his brush. Under the influence of wine, or in the company of good friends, he would seize silk or paper and flourish his brush; and then, in the exhilaration of the moment, he would throw off astonishing sketches, as though his hand were guided by some spiritual power." "Those who possessed pictures of his, handed them down as precious heir-looms of great monetary value, for he was the foremost painter of the Yüan dynasty, his blue mountains and white clouds producing an extraordinary effect of great distance."

Of his skill in handling the bamboo, he himself has left a record which does not err on the side of depreciation.

"Chao Mêng-fu's renderings of the bamboo are full of spirit, but lacking in form. Li K'an (*q. v.*) painted the form without the spirit. I succeeded in uniting the two."

It is at any rate stated that after Kao's death, pictures by him changed hands at very high prices, "over a thousand strings of *cash*" being mentioned, the equivalent in those days of a thousand ounces of silver, which of course means a much larger sum than a thousand ounces of silver now.

Ch'ien Hsüan, or Ch'ien Shun-chü, of Wu-hsing in Chehkiang, known as the Man of the Jade Pool and Roaring Torrent, graduated as *chin shih* about 1260, and, still faithful to the expiring Sung dynasty, joined a small coterie of which Chao Mêng-fu was president. When later on Chao took office under the Mongols, Ch'ien was very indignant, and wandered about, occupying himself with poetry and painting, until the end. He required the stimulus of wine: "only when he was beginning to

Portrait of Prince Huan-yeh, by CH'ÏEN HSÜAN
(CH'ÏEN SHUN-CHÜ).

Reproduced by permission from 'The Kokka' magazine, Tokio.

The Prince is apparently placing a sheath on his finger-nail; a flute is stuck in his belt. In the painting, the lovely light-red of the dress tells delightfully upon brown ground. One is reminded both of Greek and of Persian art in this most delicate specimen of the art of the Yüan dynasty. It may be that such work became a model to the Persian artists of the middle ages. It is possible also that there is an actual touch of Persian influence in this painting.

L. B.



Ch'ien Hsüan or Ch'ien Shun-chü.

get drunk was there co-ordination of mind and hand." When his paintings were finished, he troubled no more about them, and connoisseurs used to carry them away. His best efforts were said to be equal to works by the old masters. On one occasion he borrowed a picture of a white eagle; and after copying it carefully, he kept it and returned the copy, the owner not discovering the change. He painted human figures, landscapes, flowers, and birds.

Li K'an rose to high office. In 1311 he was President of the Board of Civil Office, and previous to this he had been "sent on a mission to Annam, thus deeply penetrating into the native land of the bamboo." "My friend Li K'an," says another writer, "in order to paint the portrait of this gentleman [a playful name for the bamboo], made deep researches, for he wished to get at the real inwardness of his subject. And of those who during the past two hundred years have made a name by their paintings of the bamboo, not one has shown anything like the depth and refinement of Li K'an."

He published two works, one on the bamboo in colour, and the other on the bamboo in black and white, in which methods for preparing silk for painting purposes are given.

"When Li K'an was a boy, he once stood watching an artist who was painting some bamboos, and noted the progress of the work. At first he thought he could do the same, but soon discovered that his efforts were weak, and reluctantly gave up the attempt. Later on, he became travelling pupil of an artist named Huang, and paid great attention to his master's ink studies of the bamboo; but once more he failed to achieve satisfactory results, and again retired from the struggle. In about A.D. 1265 he went to Ch'ien-t'ang (in Chehkiang), and there obtained a scroll by Wên T'ung, over which he became so enthusiastic that he devoted all his energies to this style, and also to the bamboo, with the addition of green colour. He used to say, The bamboo in black and white and in colour, both originated under the T'ang dynasty, yet from the time of Wu Tao-tzū until now, there have been but few eminent artists in this line. The beautiful drawings of Wang Wei have now become scarce; and although specimens of Hsiao Yüeh's work are still

to be seen, they are blurred and indistinct from age. Huang Ch'üan painted the spirit without the form, Ts'ui Po the form without the spirit; only Li K'an, by the completeness of his method, has succeeded in uniting the two (see *Kao K'o-kung*). Later in point of time came Wên T'ung, who rose like the bright sun in the empyrean, before whose light all fires are dimmed, or who boomed like the yellow bell (the longest of the pitchpipes), at whose note all pots and pans vibrate in response."

We are now confronted with a host of minor artists, from whose biographies it is only possible here and there to extract a few items of interest.

One of these, named Ho-li-ho-sun and evidently a Mongol, was commissioned in 1278 by Kublai Khan to paint a portrait of the great Genghis Khan, who had then been dead just fifty years. In 1279 he was further ordered to paint a likeness of Mangu Khan; and these two, together with an old portrait of Ogotai Khan, were placed in the Han-lin College.

Ho Ch'êng made his name after a somewhat equivocal fashion. He is remembered for his picture of the famous Mrs. T'ao, who, in her days of poverty, once cut off her hair to sell, in order to buy wine with the proceeds for an unexpected guest. This episode was the subject of the painting. A little boy, eight years of age, subsequently heard of as a famous scholar, was intently watching the artist at work. Suddenly the boy said, "Why didn't she sell her gold bangle and buy the wine, instead of cutting off her hair?" At this, we are told, "Ho Ch'êng was startled," and he probably made some change in the details of his work.

Wang Chên-p'êng was an official in the Grain Transport Department, and a prime favourite with the Emperor Ayuli Palpata, A.D. 1311—1320, who bestowed upon him the sobriquet of "Lonely Cloud." "He excelled in drawing boundary pictures (in a prescribed space, as explained on p. 126), and his brush-work and colouring were rhythmical and harmonious. He painted every hair and every thread, and was closely accurate in his delineation of left and right, high and low, looking down and looking up, crooked and broken (or bent), square and round, level and straight. But spirit is volatile, and cannot be fettered by method.

Li T'ieh-kuai, by YEN HUI.

In the British Museum.

One of the well-known Genii or Wizard Hermits of Taoist legend, of whom it is told that his spirit, having gone on a journey to the Sacred Mount of the Immortals, left the inanimate body under the charge of a disciple till his return; but the disciple being called away to a dying mother, the returning spirit was unable to find its body, and seeing a ragged beggar on the point of expiring, seized upon the corporeal lodging thus vacated. Li T'ieh-kuai is therefore usually represented, as here, in the guise of a beggar, with girdle of leaves and a crutch, breathing out his spiritual essence. Yen Hui is an artist whose style has had a great influence on the Japanese, by whom he is rated far higher than by his own countrymen.

L. B.



Yen Hui.

He contributed some pictures to the Ta Ming Palace, which were regarded as very fine productions."

Another writer says, "Although Wang's paintings were of the detailed and finicky order, yet his style was full of strength, and quite beyond the reach of any ordinary Academician."

"People usually declare," said another painter, "that landscape is an easy matter. I think it a very difficult one. For whenever you wish to produce a landscape, it is necessary to carry about the details, and work them out in the mind for some days before the brush may be applied. Just as in composition: there is a period of bitter thought over the theme; and until this is resolved, you are in the thrall of bonds and gyves. But when inspiration comes, you break loose and are free."

An artist named Yen Hui (*Japanese* Gan-ki) must be inserted here. Anderson, in his British Museum Catalogue, p. 487, says that "he was the last of the great masters, and is placed with Ma Yüen and Hia Kwei, to form an artistic trinity referred to by Japanese painters under the compound title of Ba-Ka-Gan." Chinese writers, however, dismiss him almost in a line. One says, "Yen Hui was a native of Chiang-shan. He was good at painting Taoist and Buddhist figures." Another says, "He painted devils very cleverly, making them quite lifelike." Now Chiang-shan is in Chehkiang, and so is Ch'ien-t'ang, the birthplace of Hsia Kuei (*q. v.*), and it was that particular province which was most often visited by the Japanese. Hence perhaps their more intimate acquaintance with Chehkiang artists.

Huang Kung-wang, styled Tzŭ-chiu, was born when his father was ninety years of age. Kung-wang means "father hope," and Tzŭ-chiu means "son long;" so that the whole name, exclusive of Huang, the surname, reads in Chinese "son long hoped-for by his father." Later on he received, in accordance with common custom, two fancy names, to wit, "Single Peak" and "Crazy Hermit." He was a very promising boy, and made great progress in the classical curriculum; however, before long he retired from life, and devoted himself to painting. He began by studying the works of Tung Yüan and of Chü Jan, but afterwards he fell back on his own powers, and created a new school, one characteristic of which seems to have been that "the

tops of his mountains presented an appearance of alum shale."

His famous contemporary Ni Tsan, whom we shall shortly reach, included him with Kao K'o-kung, Chao Mêng-fu, and Wang Mêng, as one of the four great landscape-painters of the Yüan dynasty. When living in retirement, he gave full play to his restless love of nature. "With paper and brush in his sleeve, he would roam far and wide; and whenever he came to any particularly beautiful scenery or objects, he would take rough sketches, which he would afterwards study at leisure. The result was that the magic effects of morning and evening upon the mountains, the four seasons with their varying harmonies of light and darkness, were all stored up in his mind and thrown into shape by his brush. To this we owe the thousand hills and myriad dales, ever more astounding as they increase in number; and peak upon peak and cliff upon cliff, ever more wonderful as they increase in depth. The colour he employed was chiefly a faint purple; blues and greens he used more rarely. He formed his style upon Tung Yüan, but the truth is that he surpassed his model."

Another writer says, "Huang's characteristics as an artist come under two heads. (1) When he used a faint purple colour, the tops of his mountains were mostly like alum shale, and his brush-stroke was masculine and strong. (2) When he used ink, his lines were exceedingly few, and his brush-stroke was terse and suggestive." Again, "Huang Kung-wang has been placed first of the four great painters of the Yüan dynasty; nevertheless, Wang Mêng, Ni Tsan, and Wu Chên, were his peers." He published a treatise called "Secrets of Landscape," which had some vogue.

"Wang Mêng, sometimes called Yellow Crane, was a grandson of Chao Mêng-fu on the maternal side. He loved painting, and acquired the method of his grandfather. But he did not lay himself out to please his generation; he merely painted as a means of expressing the genius that was latent in him. It was the same with his literary compositions; he placed himself under no restraint, and in a short space of time would produce several thousand words."

In landscape he took Chü Jan as his model, and he also studied the works of Wang Wei. "He did not generally use

silk, but sketched out his ideas on paper, finally carrying out his conceptions according to several schools. He would treat landscape in more than ten different ways, and trees in a great many more than that. His paths would wind and wind; his mists and clouds were vague; his mountain forests were wonderfully suggestive of darkness."

Elsewhere we read, "For T'ao Tsung-i (a well-known art-critic who flourished about A.D. 1350), he painted "The South Village," with all the details of ducks, cats, dogs, spinning-wheel, pestle for hulling rice, and the implements of everyday life. For a sense of solidity and for expression from few touches, Huang Kung-wang and Ni Tsan are supreme in their respective domains; but for general effect they must both yield to Yellow Crane."

Ni Tsan was born in 1301, and died in 1374. He refused to enter public life, and devoted his ample fortune to collecting old books and pictures. Deeply read, he affected archaic phrases, and used only the *li* script, a form of writing which disappeared from practical life about A.D. 200. He was very timid and retiring, and a great stickler for cleanliness. Foreseeing the overthrow of the Yüan dynasty, he distributed his wealth among his relatives, and took refuge in obscure poverty, wandering about the lakes and rivers of Kiangsu. "He loved to stay for ten days at a time in some monastery, happy enough with his shaded lamp and wooden bed. Sometimes he would take paper and brush, and sketch some such simple theme as a bamboo or a rock. These he would give away to all comers, and the connoisseurs of the neighbourhood bought them up at many tens of tael apiece." On one occasion "a servant brought some silk and a present of money, with a request that he would paint a picture. This made him very angry, and he replied, I am no hireling artist, a hanger-on at rich men's doors. Then he tore up the silk, and sent back the money."

"Cloud-Forest," as Ni Tsan called himself, "painted forests, bamboos, and rocks. There was none of the dust of markets or Courts about his compositions. In his landscapes he put in no human figures." Again, "He was extremely terse and refined, appearing to be tender, but in reality virile. Painters of the Sung dynasty are easy to copy; painters of the Yüan dynasty

are difficult to copy. The style, however, of painters of the Yüan dynasty can be caught, with the single exception of that of Ni Tsan."

A writer of the Ming dynasty, under which Ni Tsan passed the last six years of his life, remarks that "his work was completed before the fall of the Mongols, and may be classed as of the pleasing school." He adds, "It is said that Ni Tsan studied the works of Fêng Chin. But Fêng Chin was a eunuch; and considering Ni Tsan's high principles, I feel sure that such was not the case." Another writer says, "In his landscapes Ni Tsan was very sparing of colour; there are one or two instances, however, of quite a reverse method, and in these he thoroughly succeeded in catching the old style."

In 1329 a minor painter, named Wang Yüan, had to paint the figure of a demon on a temple wall over thirty feet in height. He began by submitting a sketch which he had painted on a number of sheets pasted together, but it was found that the arms and legs of the demon were anything but anatomically correct. "If you will deign to take instruction from an inferior," said the managing director (quoting Confucius), "I would advise you first to take your measurements, and then draw a nude figure. You can clothe it afterwards."

Wu Chên is perhaps the last of the better-known painters who flourished under Mongol rule. Popularly known as "Priest of the Plum-blossom," he seems to have excelled in landscape, bamboos, and trees, "in which he did not rank below Hsü Tao-ning or Wên T'ung. Wên T'ung concealed his picture under his bamboos; Wu Chên concealed his bamboos under his picture." Like many great Chinese artists, he always refused to draw for exalted personages; but a good piece of paper and a brush set before him at the right moment would always secure a picture. "For this reason, works of his on silk are exceedingly scarce." Another writer says that "Wu did not like painting pictures for any one, least of all portraits."

"In landscape he took Chü Jan as his model, and the copies he made from this artist's pictures were very beautiful. These, however, have been reproduced in a careless way, and are far from faithful to the originals."

"Wu Chên originally lived next door to Shêng Yü (a forgotten artist). The house of the latter was besieged with persons carrying money and silk in order to obtain pictures, whereas no one came near Wu Chên. His wife rather chaffed him about this; to which he replied, Twenty years hence there will be another story to tell. He was right; for although Shêng's work really has good technique and the short cut (the art of expressing much by little), still it is wanting in the virility and rough simplicity which characterises that of Wu Chên."

Chu Yü was a native of Kiangsu. "He was very fond of painting; and whenever he heard of a fine bit of scenery, he would hurry off thither. Just at this date, Wang Chên-p'êng was at the Court of the Emperor, Ayuli Palpata, booming his system of boundary pictures; and Chu Yü accompanied him on his travels and thoroughly acquired his method. When Chu was ordered by the Emperor to prepare a portrait of Buddha, he submitted one, not more than a foot square. It was a beautiful picture, but the ideas of the artist, springing up on all sides, were not to be held in check by rule and line. People said that even Wang Chên-p'êng did not surpass him."

A romancing writer says, "Chu Yü had painted his two pictures, 'The Dragon Palace in the Purple Mist' and 'The Spirit Pavilion in the Green Thicket,' no less than ten years before the public found out that he was a painter of genius. At the close of the Yüan dynasty (1368), his neighbourhood was attacked by river-pirates. All the inhabitants left their homes and fled, except Chu, who sat in an upper room embracing his two pictures. The pirates saw from afar a lunar rainbow stretching over the town; and when they approached, they discovered that it rose from Chu's house. Suspecting some great treasure, they broke in; but on seeing the two pictures they were furiously angry, and tore them to shreds before leaving."

We are now at the close of the shortlived but brilliant Yüan or Mongol dynasty. A few minor artists remain, such as Ch'ên Chêng, of whose work there is, I believe, a specimen in the British Museum, and of whom his own nationals do not seem to have had a very exalted opinion; also Kao Hsien, whose horses were so fiery that people were afraid they would turn

into dragons. Then we come to the miscellaneous crowd relegated as usual to the end. Among these we find several of the Taoist Popes, all descendants, in common with the Taoist Pope of today, of Chang Tao-ling, who in A.D. 153 discovered the elixir of life, and was taken up to heaven as an Immortal. Next come thirty-one Buddhist priests, but none to compare with Yüan Ai of the preceding dynasty. Five women bring up the rear, and two of these deserve mention.

The Lady Kuan was wife of the famous artist Chao Mêng-fu. She herself painted the bamboo, the plum-tree, and the epidendrum, besides landscape and Buddhistic figures. A certain style of bamboo originated with her, and we are told that "for an inch of silk or a slip of paper (of her work), people would vie in offering large sums. Later students took her pictures as models." She published an elaborate treatise entitled "The Bamboo in Monochrome," which is still regarded as an authoritative work.

The Lady Li was daughter of a former Senior Classic, and married into the family of a high official named Li. She was a skilled musician, and also painted well, especially the epidendrum. At the foot of one such picture she placed the following inscription. "In my two families, my father-in-law compares the epidendrum with the perfect man, my father is extremely fond of it, and I too am fond of it. When not employed in needlework, I occupied myself by painting this picture, as a form of feminine amusement. I had no thought of making my name known in the world."

The painting of the Yüan dynasty, says one writer, is hit off in the lines by Su Tung-p'o.

He who values a picture for its resemblance,
Has a critical faculty near to that of a child.
He who writes a poem according to a pre-arranged scheme,
Has certainly no claim to the title of poet.

That of the Sung dynasty in the lines of Chao I-tao.

Art produces something beyond the form of things,
Though its importance lies in preserving the form of things;
Poetry gives us thoughts beyond the domain of art,
But is valued in that it exhibits the characteristics of art.

Jao Tzŭ-jan in his *Art of Painting* enters twelve caveats for the guidance of the amateur. The latter is warned (1) "not to

overcrowd his composition." "Where landscape is in question, the artist should begin by spreading his white silk in a bright and quiet room. He should then wait until his mind is tranquil, and his ideas have taken shape, before setting to work. He should use large or small-sized silks according to his subject. If the silk extends to a great number of panels, or the wall for a fresco is more than a hundred feet in length, he should take a bamboo pole, and with some charcoal sketch out roughly the contour of the hills, high and low, of the trees, great and small, and of buildings and human figures, assigning to each its proper place. He should now step back some tens of paces and examine this carefully; he will soon see if it will do. After this he can proceed to paint with a thin wash of ink." (2) "He must not fail to make clear the distinction between that which is far off and that which is near." (3) "His mountains must have breath and pulse," so that they resemble living organisms more than dead matter. (4) "His streams must come from some source," visible or suggested, and not trickle across the picture anyhow. (5) "His scenery must not be without levels and risings," or it would be monotonous. (6) "His roads must have beginnings and ends." (7) "His rocks must show only one face." (8) "His trees must have not less than four branches." (9) "His human figures must have their heads and shoulders bent." (10) "His buildings must be scattered irregularly." (11) "His light and dark effects must be appropriately used," and as the text points out, he must not let a snow effect be confused with a rain effect. (12) "His colouring must be guided by fixed laws."

Among the more important works on painting produced under the Yüan dynasty, we have the *Hua chien* of T'ang Hou, which has been wrongly assigned by some to the Sung dynasty. This gives a large number of desultory notes on painting and painters, from Ts'ao Pu-hsing down to the beginning of the Yüan dynasty, many of which have been utilised in the foregoing pages.

"The old masters," says T'ang Hou, "always had some deep meaning in their pictures, and never put brush to silk unless dominated by an idea;" also he states that in his day "three pictures by Li Lung-mien would have to be given for one or two by Wu Tao-tzū, and two by Wu Tao-tzū for one of Ku

K'ai-chih or Lu T'an-wei." He further says, "In forming collections of pictures, Taoist and Buddhist subjects rank first, the reason being that the old masters put a great deal of work into them, wishing to inspire reverence, love, and a fondness for ceremonial. Next come human figures, which may be used as patterns or warnings. Then comes landscape with its inexhaustible delights, followed by flowers, and by horses, which are among divine animals. Portraits of gentlemen and ladies, and pictures of barbarians, though very clever, are scarcely adjuncts to intellectual culture. At the present day collectors of pictures mostly set a high store upon works by old masters, and despise those of modern times."

The *T'u hui pao chien* by Hsia Wên-yen also contains some interesting items. "Religious subjects, human figures, oxen and horses, have not been so well painted in recent times as by the old masters; on the other hand, landscape, trees, rocks, flowers, bamboos, birds, and fishes, have been better painted in modern days." The names of Ku K'ai-chih, Lu T'an-wei, Chang Sêng-yu, Wu Tao-tzŭ, Yen Li-tê and Yen Li-pên, Chou Fang, Han Kan, and Tai Sung, are chosen to represent the old masters; while Li Ch'êng, Kuan T'ung, Fan K'uan, Tung Yüan, Hsü Hsi, and Huang Ch'üan, maintain the honour of more modern painters.

"Former generations used to value and keep the studies of their artists; for these, produced without effort and elaboration, possessed a natural grace of their own."

"You should look at a picture as you do at a beautiful girl, in whom there is an underlying charm quite apart from mere outline of form."

The *Cho kêng lu* by T'ao Tsung-i is an important work. Its author contended that every artist who painted portraits should be thoroughly familiar with the science of physiognomy, which, like palmistry and phrenology, has long been a favourite study with the Chinese. He also reduced a good deal of his knowledge of art to formulæ which might be committed to memory, such as, "Distant water has no bends, distant people have no eyes."

CHAPTER VII

A. D. 1368—1644

The Ming Dynasty

In the year 1368 the first Emperor of the Ming dynasty mounted the throne, and within a few years the last hopes of the Mongols were finally destroyed.

The list of Ming painters is a long one, including over twelve hundred names. It opens with twenty-one Princes, who seem to have been mere amateurs, and may be dismissed accordingly. These are followed by a number of minor artists, whose skill in various branches of art is insisted upon with a monotonous regularity of ready-made phraseology. From the accounts of many of these it is difficult to extract much of any interest whatever. An artist named Hsin Wei is recorded simply because, having fallen off a horse and permanently disabled his right arm, he bravely set to work and learnt to paint with his left hand. But beyond this we are told nothing, and we have heard something like this before.

Before proceeding with artists proper, it may be of interest to quote from an essay on the origin of painting by Sung Lien, 1310—1381, who edited the History of the Yüan Dynasty, and also wrote on archaeology and art.

“Shih Huang and Ts'ang Chieh were both inspired men of old. The former invented writing, the latter painting. Writing and painting are not separate arts; their origin was one and the same. When heaven and earth were first separated, all things were produced, each with its own colour and shape, but in confusion for want of names. Even heaven and earth themselves knew not how to style these, until an inspired man arose, and gave appropriate names to all things (*Genesis* ii. 19, 20), so that

high parts, low parts, moving creatures, and growing plants, might thus be distinguished from one another. Above were the sun, moon, wind, thunder, rain, dew, ice, and snow; below were rivers, seas, mountains, hills, plants, trees, birds, and beasts; in the middle were the affairs of man, with his partings and meetings, and the principles of things, now manifest, now vague, informed by the influences of spirituality and change. Thus, the wants of mankind were supplied, and all conditions of things had received attention; but without writing there could be no record of fact, and without painting no presentment of form. These two are roads, which follow different routes and yet lead to the same goal. Therefore I said they were not separate arts, but that their origin was one and the same."

After going on to show that writing was developed from pictures of things and of ideas, he says, "Among the ancients, those who were skilled in painting illustrated the *Odes*, or the *Classic of Filial Piety*, or the *Erh Ya* (a dictionary of terms used in the Classics), or the *Analects of Confucius*, or the *Book of Changes*, so that the contents of these works might not be obscured by time; and down to the days of the Han, Wei, Chin, and Liang dynasties (6th century A.D.), books on education, ceremonies, virtuous women, etc., were always furnished with pictures, as an aid to the better apprehension of the Confucian doctrines. Gradually, however, there came a falling away, and artists were attracted by the glories of chariots, horses, soldiers, and women; turning their thoughts to the beauties of flowers, birds, insects, and fishes; and giving play to their emotions in the representation of mountain, forest, stream, and rock, until the old conception of the pictorial art was altogether lost. The first great change dates from Ku K'ai-chih and Lu T'an-wei; the next from Yen Li-pên and Wu Tao-tzû; and the next from Kuan T'ung, Li Ch'êng, and Fan K'uan."

Ma Liang, known to the Japanese as Ba-rio, is said by Anderson to have lived under the Yüan dynasty and to have been a son of Ma Yüan of the Sung dynasty. The first statement is no doubt correct; it is however Chinese custom to assign a man to the dynasty under which he dies, and that rule has been uniformly observed in this book. It is of course impossible that

he could have been the son of Ma Yüan, nor does his Chinese biographer make such a statement. The only works of his which are mentioned are pictures of the Four Heavenly Kings who guard the four quarters of the universe.

Hu Ch'iu-pi was "a native of Hai-yen (in Chehkiang). He was very skilled in painting portraits, and was desirous of painting one thousand portraits of a Buddhist priest called Ch'u Shih; but when about half of these were finished, the priest died. Just then some Japanese arrived; and so soon as they saw one of the portraits, they fell down one after another on their knees and worshipped it, saying, This man was a patriarch of our country. They next proceeded to buy as many copies as they could get, the result being that Hu Ch'iu-pi made a very good thing out of it."

Fan Ch'uan-chuang went as servant to a painter of his day in order to learn the art. But he soon found out that he had nothing to learn; and one day he rushed into the house, apparently in a great fright, saying that he had seen a whole troop of bogeys. Taking a sheet of paper, he began to sketch what he had seen, and before long he had produced a number of demons of all kinds of shapes and in all kinds of attitudes, making altogether quite a marvellous picture, to the great astonishment of his master. Then he returned home, and established his name by sending to market for sale a goose which he had painted, and which other geese attacked as though alive.

Hsia Ch'ang (*Japanese*: Ka-chiu-sho) was a Director of Sacrificial Worship, who acquired such fame as a painter of bamboos and rocks that his pictures "were bought even by distant barbarians of the East" (? *Japanese*). "He was the foremost artist of his day in bamboo; and at Hsi-liang (in Kansuh) a single stalk of his would fetch ten shoes of silver."

It may here be remarked that the Chinese critic is often rather reckless in his classification of artists. Wang Fu, known as the Lover of Rocks, and contemporary with Hsia Ch'ang, is spoken of as "the greatest painter of bamboos in the dynasty (to date),"—a statement which can hardly be reconciled with that of the preceding paragraph, except on the ground that different critics have different heroes.

The following story is told of Hsia Ch'ang in connection with another artist of the same period.

"Ch'ü Cho was a recluse who painted landscapes, especially effects of distance and dense vegetation. He studied the bamboo under Hsia Ch'ang, but the latter was very averse to painting in any one's presence, so that Ch'ü Cho could never get to see his actual brush-work and colouring. To meet this, Ch'ü fixed a piece of silk on a wall, and quietly waited until, as the result of a drinking-bout, the master, under the influence of wine, might do something of his own accord. So soon, however, as Hsia Ch'ang was tipsy, he took his leave and went away. Thereupon Ch'ü, as the fancy took him, splashed over the silk a few stalks of bamboo in wind and rain. Some days afterwards, Hsia Ch'ang happened to see the picture, and said, in great astonishment, How did I come to do these? You were drunk, replied Ch'ü Cho. When I was drunk, was it? rejoined Hsia. Oh yes, I see I have not given the finishing touches. A few more leaves flying out at the top would very much increase the effect of a bamboo in wind and rain. At this Ch'ü Cho said to himself, I shall never be able to draw bamboos. My bamboos will always be credited to Hsia Ch'ang. Accordingly he gave up this line, and devoted himself to pine-trees, in which he achieved great success."

Chiang Tzū-ch'êng was a painter of landscape and of human figures. He began with the former; but in middle life he seems to have felt pricks of conscience, which caused him to devote his energies wholly to the production of Buddhist pictures, in which he was said to be "the first hand of the Ming dynasty." These attracted the attention of the Emperor Yung Lo (A.D. 1403—1425) of encyclopaedia fame, and he was commissioned to paint likenesses of Buddha and of various Bôdhisatvas "for presentation to barbarian nations." His human figures, together with the tigers of Chao Lien, and the plumage of Pien Wên-chin, were collectively known as the Three Wonders of the age.

Nothing further is recorded of Chao Lien; but of Pien we read that besides his skill as above-mentioned, he could paint "the sweet smile of a flower, and the scream of a bird upon the wing,—since the days of the Sung and Yüan dynasties, the one great artist."

Another "foremost painter of the present (Ming) dynasty" was Tai Chin. When he reached the capital in search of fortune, there was a small clique of official artists, *i. e.* Academicians, who laid down the law for the art world and its patrons. These were Hsieh Huan, who gave lessons in landscape-drawing to the Emperor Hsüan Tsung (1426—1436), Ni Tuan, Shih Jui, and Li Tsai; all of them diligent students and copyists of the older masters, but with no initiative of their own. And they were horribly jealous of Tai Chin. "On the occasion of an exhibition of pictures in the Palace, the first scroll shown by Tai Chin was a river scene in autumn with a solitary angler, who was wearing a red coat and was absorbed in his fishing. Now red is well known to be a very difficult colour to handle, and Tai had succeeded in reproducing the old style. Hsieh Huan however, while admitting that the picture was very beautiful, regretted that it was at the same time common and wanting in refinement. Tai Chin begged him to be more explicit; whereupon Hsieh Huan added that red was the colour of official robes, and that to wear this colour when out fishing was a great breach of etiquette. At this Tai shook his head, and refused to exhibit any more of his pictures. He returned home, and died in great poverty, and only after his death did people learn his artistic worth."

Before his untimely end he seems to have got through no inconsiderable quantity of work. "In his landscapes he united the beauties of all other schools, though perhaps the influence of Li T'ang and Ma Yüan predominated. His pictures of spiritual beings, his human figures, animals, flowers, fruits, and bird-plumages, were all of exquisite workmanship; while in the majesty and dignity of his gods, the onrush and ferocity of his demons, the colouring of clothes and their folds, heavy or light effects, simple or laboured, he was not inferior to the worthies of the T'ang and Sung dynasties. As to his copies of the old masters, if unsigned, it was impossible, from the point of view of technique, to distinguish them from the originals. Such was the excellence of his art."

In many ways he seems to have been a fanciful artist. He was fond of painting grapes together with the bamboo and crab's-claw (*hsieh-chao ts'ao*). For painting human figures he used iron

wire and also epidendrum leaves, after some style which is described as "Silkworm's head and rat's tail."

Chang Ning was a eunuch who rose to the rank of Prefect; "but," says one writer, "he could not do the looking-downs and looking-ups of his day, and soon retired. He loved painting; and yet it was not easy to get a picture out of him. When I was a boy, I saw his two works "Sunset at Sea" and "Stone Bridge over Waterfall," both of which were masterpieces of weird and wonderful effects. Lately too I saw his picture of (the poet) "Li T'ai-po looking at the Lu-shan Cascade;" in which, by the streaming water dashing through dark trees and rocks, there stood a man wearing the cap of the T'ang dynasty and a red coat, who was looking up and twirling his beard, his mind evidently full of lofty thoughts drawn from the tumbling river and the yielding cliff. Was not this man none other than the painter himself?" A woodcut of this picture may still be seen.

Lin Liang was a native of Kuangtung, who became eminent as a painter of flowers, fruit, birds, trees, etc. He is said to have been a very rapid worker, using his brush as though he were writing the "grass character," beyond compare in his own day. The eagle attributed to him, and here reproduced, would suffice to stamp him as an artist of great merit.

Among minor artists of the period we have Tu Ch'ung, who illustrated his own poems; and Huang Chien, "who could paint his own portrait from a mirror." The latter "had painted some cabbages on an old wall in the Han-lin College, and several hundred scholars had written appropriate inscriptions, when one day the wall collapsed, to the great distress of everybody. However, when the wall was rebuilt, Huang Chien re-wrote all the inscriptions, and painted in the cabbages as before."

There was also Chu Chung-kuang, who painted magpies, one of which, a great many years later, being pasted on to a wall, began to chatter loudly, which so frightened the owner's wife that she burnt it as uncanny. Also Chang Chi, who painted "Shâkyamuni prophesying before his Mother," "The Hall of Tushita" (where Bôdhisatvas are reborn before appearing on earth as Buddhas), and "Paradise," all three said to be beautiful

Wild Geese and Rushes, by LIN LIANG.

In the British Museum.

A fine example of the ink-sketch, so much practised by the Sung painters and continued by the earlier masters of the Ming dynasty, among whom Lin Liang stands in the first rank; according to Mr. Fenollosa, he is the greatest of all the Ming artists. The picture is one of a pair.

L. B.



Lin Liang.

Eagle. Attributed to LIN LIANG.

In the British Museum.

Formerly ascribed to Mu Ch'í; but though the general manner is that of the Sung artists, the actual brushwork is less subtly modulated. Like the last illustration, it is probably from the hand of Lin Liang. It is one of a pair. Hawks and eagles are favourite subjects of Chinese as of Japanese art; and in painting them the utmost thought and skill have been expended to express the fierce raptorial character of these birds. This interest and seizure of character in non-human life may be compared with the wonderful creations of the French sculptor Barye, but with little else in European art, so often tainted in such subjects with a factitious reflection of human sentiment.

L. B.



Attributed to Lin Liang.

pictures. Also Li K'ung-hsiu, who could paint cats which would keep any house entirely free from rats.

Wu Wei was a painter of a higher rank. His skill in landscape and human figures brought him to the notice of the Emperor Hsien Tsung, 1465—1488, who bestowed upon him an embroidered robe and appointed him to an official post. "He was however over-fond of theatricals, wine, and women; and any one who wished for a specimen of his art, had only to arrange a party for him with these accessories. One day, when in the middle of a banquet of the kind, he was suddenly summoned by the Emperor. Being quite tipsy, he had to be supported into the palace; and when the Emperor bade him draw a spring among pine-trees, he fell on his knees, and in doing so knocked over the inkpot. In a moment, with his hand only, he produced on the floor a charming picture, with which the Emperor was much delighted, declaring that it was an inspired work."

The Emperor Hsiao Tsung, 1488—1506, was also a warm patron of his, and gave him a seal on which was engraved "The Senior Painter," the analogy being with the Senior Classic at the triennial examinations for the highest degree. He was further taken up by a nobleman, who invited him to join his establishment, and called him "The Young Immortal," a name by which he was afterwards known.

"Once, when roaming about, he passed through a small place known as Apricot Village; and being thirsty, he asked an old woman for a drink of tea. In the following year he was there again, but in the interim the old woman had died. Then he drew forth a brush, and sketched from memory the portrait of the deceased. When her son saw this he was deeply moved, and begged to be allowed to keep the picture. On another occasion, he was drinking at the house of a friend, and sketching between his cups. As a joke, he seized the seedcase of a lotus-flower, and dipping it in the ink, dabbed it in several places on to the paper. No one could divine what he was going to do; when suddenly with a few strokes of his brush he turned it into a beautiful picture known as 'Catching Crabs.'"

The method of "flinging ink" on to silk or paper, and then weaving the splashes into his design, seems to have been a

favourite one with Wu Wei; and we are told that bystanders were often amazed at the way in which order and beauty were evolved out of what appeared to them a hopeless chaos. In painting landscape his brush was firm and vigorous; his trees and rocks were drawn in what is known as the "axe-cleavage" (*fu p'ei*) style, by which is probably meant a sharp and clean-cut outline.

Shên Chou, another well-known painter of this period, was born in 1427 and died in 1507. "Mountain-peaks, clouds, waves, flowers, plants, birds, beasts, insects, fishes,—the characteristics of all these he reproduced with the utmost fidelity, fully conveying his ideas with the fewest possible strokes. Then he himself would write the inscriptions, thus gaining the sobriquet of Double First. In loftiness of effect he surpassed all rivals, yet he could bring himself into close sympathy with the brute creation. A hawker or a herdboys, paper in hand, would meet with no rebuff. Or even if any one begged for an inscription, secretly intending it for sale, he readily acceded to the request. So that not only near to the capital (Peking), but far away in Fuhkien, Chehkiang, Ssüch'uan and Kuangtung, his works were eagerly bought, to be kept as valuable possessions. Such a radiance did his genius diffuse over the age in which he lived."

His earliest lessons were given to him by his father, who was also an artist; and from these he gained a general knowledge of the various schools of painting. "In middle life he devoted himself to the works of Huang Kung-wang; but later on his soul became drunk with the art of Wu Chên, the Priest of the Plum-blossom, succeeding so well that when pictures by these two artists were mixed up, it was impossible to say which was which." He liked to paint on a large scale, and nothing short of forty feet was considered by him as a big picture; sometimes, when he was painting a landscape, the lookers-on would see as it were a mist filling his studio.

"One day a contemporary artist, named Shih Chung, went to call upon him. Finding that his friend was out, and seeing a piece of white silk in the hall, Shih Chung splashed some ink over it, and produced a landscape, and then went off without leaving his name. Oh, cried Shên Chou on his return, I see that the Fool (Shih's fancy name) has been here. And he at once

sent a man to bring him back, and kept him as a visitor for three months."

A landscape scroll, measuring seven feet in length by one foot in height, by this artist is in the possession of Mr. E. C. H. Moule of Shanghai.

Kuo Yü began by studying for an official career, but he soon gave up the pursuit and devoted himself wholly to art. "He travelled to all the famous mountains, and exclaimed, Why must people learn to paint from books? Here are the pictures themselves!" All the known painters of the day were eager to make his acquaintance, and his pictures sold easily at high prices. "When persons of rank tried to get pictures out of him, he would stare at the roof and count the beams, without making any reply. If they persisted, he would jump up excitedly, and finally rush out of the room with a howl." About 1495 a conference of leading artists was summoned by Imperial command. It was held in the Palace, but Kuo Yü managed to excuse himself from attending.

Chung Li was renowned for his clouds, mountains, plants, and insects. "The door of his house fronted the South Hill; and day after day he would sit cross-legged beneath the shade of a luxuriant pine, and watch the shifting hues of peak and cloud. Then when inspiration came, he would hurriedly make for his brush."

With like devotion Sun K'an, another minor artist, painted the chrysanthemum. "He was exceedingly fond of this flower, and cultivated it in his own garden. Morning and evening he was looking after his chrysanthemums, the result being that when he came to paint them he painted their souls, and gave to his pictures something which other pictures of them have not got."

Hsiao Kung-po excelled in portraits. "These were not mere likenesses; from their colouring it was possible to foretell the success or failure in life of the sitters." By this of course is meant that Hsiao's portraits actually reproduced those very traits of countenance by which the Chinese physiognomist—an old practitioner in China—claims to divine the future of his client. The following story is told of the painter's early days.

"A teacher of painting happening to fix his abode at a local

temple, Hsiao took lessons from him, and soon picked up all that his master had to impart. One day it was Hsiao's duty to draw some water, and he arrived late for his lesson. The teacher began to scold him; but Hsiao urged that he had been watching two bogeys fight, and had forgotten all about his work. Then he took some of the water, and with it sketched the scene on the ground, to the great astonishment of his teacher."

T'ang Yin was an artist of great promise and no mean performance. "In 1498 he came out first at the great public examination at Nanking. But his chief field of investigation was Nature (*tsao hua*); he was not much attracted by the essay-writing and verse-composing of his day." He painted landscape, human figures, boats, carriages, and pavilions with such success that critics say "he was worthy to rank, among older painters, with but after Li T'ang, and to share, among recent artists, the mat with Shên Chou." But we further read that "in the achievement of fame his health broke down. During his retirement he painted the picture entitled "A Beauty," which has been made widely known by connoisseurs. And gazing on the works he has left behind, it is impossible not to heave a sigh over his untimely fate."

"One day," adds the writer of the above, "I was stopping at an inn, and the landlord hung up a painting of a chrysanthemum by T'ang Yin. I took my pen, and wrote upon it the following verse,

If the flower has no owner, for whom does it blow,
Condemned all alone in some thicket to grow? —
Alas, all the beauty that money can buy
Shall pass on the wings of the zephyr and die!"

In the *Geschichte der Kunst aller Zeiten und Völker*, by Karl Woermann, vol. I, p. 533, there is a reproduction of a picture in the Grassi-Museum at Leipsic from the brush of this artist. It is entitled "Göttin über dem Drachen in Wolken," and bears the date of 1508, with the artist's name and seal. The Goddess, whoever she may be, is walking over clouds, from a break in which emerge the head and claws of a dragon, and is striking a seven-stringed lute which she bears in her arms. An attendant who follows behind is carrying a *ju i*, generally called a "sceptre," about which there is so much misconception that a few words

on the subject may not be out of place here. Chao Hsi-ku, an archaeologist of the 13th century, tells us that the *ju i* was originally made of iron, and was used "for pointing the way" and also "for guarding against the unexpected," *i. e.* for self-defence. It was, in fact, a kind of blunt sword, and traces of basket-work are still to be found inside what must have been the sword-guard. Later on, when it had come to be merely a part of ceremonial regalia, other materials, such as amber, crystal, jade, lacquer, and bamboo, were substituted for iron. This account is confirmed by more recent authorities, and comprises all we really know about the *ju i*, which today is frequently sent by friend to friend as a token of good wishes = May you have your heart's desire!

Ch'iu Ying studied under Chou Ch'ên, the latter an artist about whose real position critics seem to disagree. The former soon discovered that he would never reach high rank, and contented himself with the simple rôle of copyist, producing many pictures which were not to be distinguished from the originals, even by experts. It has already become fairly clear that the position of a copyist in Chinese art is not altogether that which is assigned to the copyist in Western countries; especially as in China considerable latitude seems to be allowed, and any copyist would meet with high praise who might manage to improve on the original. Ch'iu Ying used yellow paper for his work, which in point of fineness "would not have discredited the old masters." His picture "To the Woods!" must have been a strange *tour de force*. We are told that "its human figures, birds, beasts, hills, forests, belvederes, banners, carriages, and military equipment, were one and all reproduced by memory from the works of distinguished artists, and skilfully fitted together to form what certainly may be called a wonderful composition and a triumph of pictorial art."

Underneath his original picture, "Immortals at Chess," a critic wrote, "Ch'iu Ying is a re-incarnation of Chao Po-chü; even Wên T'ung and Shên Chou have not covered all his ground."

Wên Chêng-ming, known to the Japanese as Bun-chō-mei, was born in 1522 and died in 1567. Entering official life, he received an appointment in the Han-lin College, which made it easy for

him to carry on the absorbing pursuit of art. "By nature he was very fond of painting, but he refused to be bound by any set rules. Thus, when he came across any of the masterpieces of antiquity, he would examine them and try to seize their meaning, while at the same time he gave full play to the dictates of his own genius, the result being that he was enabled to produce work not inferior to that of the old masters themselves."

"Shên Chou, an artist of wide learning and great skill, was adopted as his model by Wên Chêng-ming. The latter succeeded in acquiring a similarity of style, but as regards vivid colouring he altogether surpassed his master, and was popularly considered to unite in himself the general characteristics of Chao Mêng-fu, Ni Tsan, and Huang Kung-wang." Indeed, for rhythm and colouring he is said by one writer "to walk alone in his generation."

An unfortunate merchant once offered him ten ounces of silver for a picture. "I am not an artisan," he replied; "do not insult me thus." We have had this story before under Ni Tsan; the following however is new.

There was a painter named Chu Lang, who had been a pupil under Wên Chêng-ming, and whose "trees in his landscapes seemed to have no movement in them." But he had so far acquired Wên's style that he was able to draw pictures which could be passed off as the genuine work of the master. "One day, a servant who had been instructed by a passing stranger to take some money in his hand and apply to Chu Lang for an imitation Wên Chêng-ming, presented himself by mistake at the house of the latter. When he had delivered his message, Wên said to him, I paint the real Wên Chêng-mings; surely they ought to be as good as Chu Lang's imitations!" It may be noted here that a fine landscape by Wên Chêng-ming is in the possession of Mr. Arthur Morrison.

There was another pupil of Wên Chêng-ming, named Ch'ên Shun, who subsequently made a reputation as a painter of flowers, insects, landscape, etc. "His flowers and birds," we are told, "were extremely fascinating. But the colours used were too faint, and in process of time the pictures disappeared." Ch'ên's younger brother seems to have had doubts about the elder's proficiency, for one day he said to Wên Chêng-ming, "My

brother copies you in his painting, does he not? Your brother, replied Wên, is a clever fellow; he has quite an original turn of his own; I can't teach him anything. Such," adds the writer, "was the humility of Wên Chêng-ming." He was also superstitious; for he warned his pupils that the bamboos about Nanking were informed by human souls, and should not be put into pictures.

One more of his pupils, named Ch'ien Ku, raised himself by his own originality of mind from the position of a poverty-stricken and illiterate youth to that of one of the most accomplished artists of his day. He declared that a painter's soul was as it were fused and poured into a matrix provided for it at birth, and that consequently it was idle to attempt to force this soul to be other than itself. He therefore refused to follow slavishly the traditions of any master, but struck out a line for himself, in accordance with the promptings of his own genius. Unfortunately we are told nothing about his art, except that in his style he resembled Shên Chou, and deserved to be ranked with him.

Kao Ku, who called himself the Bearded Immortal, painted landscapes, birds, and flowers. He was indebted for much of his inspiration to the four great artists of the Sung and Yüan dynasties, whose works he carefully studied. But he was too fond of wine, and loved to drink himself half tipsy, and then with loosened hair and bare feet to throw himself into all kinds of artistic postures.

"Near him lived a Mr. Sung, who had suffered from malarial fever for over a year. One day Kao Ku went to enquire after his health, and stopped to take a drink. When he had taken a good many, Sung produced some silk and asked him for a picture; whereupon Ku sketched a cluster of chrysanthemums with their heads drooping over a bank, fragrant and lovely, and as though actually moving in the breeze. Sung suddenly began to feel better, and asked for something more; to which Kao responded by drawing a weird rock with a kiosque, and a couple of towering bamboos with a few fluttering leaves, the rustle of which could almost be heard. Sung jumped up and gazed at it, with every hair standing on end; and from that hour the fever left him."

Chang Chi, known to the Japanese as Chō-ki, was a native of Hai-yen in Chehkiang. He painted "gentlemen and ladies," "faintly colouring the faces. For the three *t'ing* he used colour more liberally. The three *t'ing* are the forehead, nose, and chin. This was the old method; it is not practised by painters nowadays."

There is in the British Museum (No. 14 of Anderson's Chinese Catalogue) a portrait on silk of a Chinese lady by Chang Chi. "The drawing," says Anderson, "is free and graceful, but very conventional; colouring soft and harmonious."

Hou Yüeh gained the highest degree in 1541, and subsequently rose to high office. He was clever at portraits, and "sketched the likenesses of all the three hundred graduates who came out on the list with himself. These pictures he carefully preserved, and years afterwards, when he met any of his former colleagues, it was easy to identify them thereby. On one occasion, when travelling among the mountains, he was captured by brigands and held to ransom. He sent a servant to the city to fetch the money required, and meanwhile chatted pleasantly with his captors, studying their features all the time. Then when he was released, he drew likenesses of all of them and sent them to the authorities, who were thus enabled to capture every single man."

Yen Shih-hsien was a poet and a painter. "One autumn night he saw on a paper screen the flickering shadow thrown by a pot of chrysanthemums. Moistening his ink, he sketched in the flowers, guided by the outline of the shadow. The result was life-like."

Sun K'o-hung attracted much attention by the beauty of his landscapes, based upon the style of Ma Yüan. For his flowers and birds he went to the works of Hsü I and Chao Ch'ang, and profited so much from his models that to both subjects he was able to impart an appearance of sentient life. In his later years he was fond of drawing the plum and the bamboo.

Another writer says, "Sun was a man of great natural ability. His brushwork had the characteristics of antiquity. For picturesqueness of rocks, for aged trunks of trees, for beauty of movement in flowers, and for obliqueness of leaves, face or back, every previous artist must give way to him." "His reputation was great in his day. Applicants for pictures blocked his door,

and to most of them he instructed his porter to give a favourable reply."

A contemporary of his, named Ku Chêng-i, was so annoyed by the intrusion of visitors that he contemplated fitting his house with an iron door. Meanwhile he performed a signal service to art by making a large collection of the works of the great painters of the Yüan dynasty, which he carefully copied himself and also placed at the disposal of his friends.

Extensive copying seems now to have been universal. Sung Yü-chin, when a child, saw a herdboyc driving a buffalo, and sketched the group so well on a wall that he was allowed to neglect the Classics and study art. He began, we are told, "by diligently copying the old masters, day and night;" and he subsequently reached the level of the good painters of his day.

The exception to the rule is furnished by Chou Chih-mien, who "sketched flowers and birds with much spirit and rhythm, and also painted with freshness and refinement. At his home he kept every possible variety of bird, and carefully watched how they drank, pecked, flew, and stood still. Owing to this, his works were always full of vitality,"—a veritable Chinese Marks!

Yu Ch'iu lived at T'ai-ts'ang in Kiangsu. He painted landscapes, but is best known for the military scenes he placed upon the wall of the local temple to Kuan Ti, the God of War, and also for his Buddhist pictures at a famous monastery in the same city.

Passing over Wang Shang-kung, "painter of the Lohans, whose brushwork, airy and nebulous, was like gossamer floating in the void, like the impact of a fine hair upon the face," we come to two artists, contemporaries and fellow-townsmen, who enjoyed a wide vogue in their day.

Ting Yün-p'êng, the "Cloud-dwelling Rukh," is better known by his signature Nan-yü or "Southern Plumes," in allusion to Chuang Tzŭ's account of the great bird which rose to a height of 30,000 miles, and flew southwards for six months to the Celestial Lake. He was a native of Hsiu-ning in Anhui, and "he drew human figures, landscapes, and Buddhist portraits, all with exceeding delicacy." "His style was wonderfully like that of Li Lung-mien, with no more difference than the difference in size

between a filament of silk and a hair, while their rendering of thought and of bearing was no farther apart than the eyebrows and the eyelashes; and unless his brush had been guided by inspiration, this result he could not possibly have achieved."

A great many woodcuts of pictures by this artist have been preserved, but no doubt all of them poorly represent the real genius of the painter. One of these is entitled "Joined Trees,"



A charming example of Ming decorative treatment of a landscape subject. L. B.

and consists of two rugged trees, bare of leaves, and joined about halfway up, something like the Siamese twins, by two branches which have grown into one another. Another is the "Heavenly Horse,"—not the usual Chinese copy of Pegasus, with wings, but a wild fiery animal, whose neck is clothed with thunder, plunging in mid air with snorting mouth, and tail and mane erect. The number of brush-strokes employed to produce this effect is marvellously small.

There is also a curious picture of an elephant, a horse, and a hare, crossing a river, with the following legend, "On this bank

ye are three; on that bank ye will be one. Ye are now in mid-stream; haste across, and miss not the opportunity."

Ting's great contemporary was Wu T'ing, better known by his style, Tso Kan, with which he signed his pictures. Two of these were commemorated in rhapsodical songs. The first, a picture of Buddha, was said to "resemble the works of Chang Sêng-yu and Wu Tao-tzŭ, and to be very little inferior in point of inspiration to those of Ku K'ai-chih." The second was "Shâkyamuni Buddha preaching the Law in Srâvasti," and the magnificence of this painting so impressed one writer that he said Wu T'ing must have studied his art in a previous state of existence.

But among the woodcuts available, published in 1588, during the artist's life, it is difficult to discover any technical justification for such remarks about him as have been quoted above. At the same time he was bold enough to paint the moon swept by flying clouds,—a patch from the sky and nothing more. One strange picture of his consists of six tall bamboos, among the topmost leaves of which is seen a square banner with four characters at the corners and a circle in the middle, the latter containing a triple triangle with a character at each point and one in the centre.

Wang Ch'ang is mentioned as a clever painter of horses after the style of the T'ang dynasty, "but his strong point was drawing in profile. In his travels he reached Nanking, and fell in with a military official, blind of one eye, who begged him to paint his portrait. Wang set his wits to work, and produced a picture in which the military official was in the act of discharging a cross-bow, one eye being closed for the purpose of taking aim. The latter was delighted with it, and gave Wang several pounds of silver for his pains."

Chiang Ch'ao-tsung was a man of great talents, his poems and essays being of a high order; and a friend once said punningly of him, "This River (*Chiang* = river) will never be frozen or in want of food." Yet he came very near falsifying the prophecy; for he took to art, and failed at first to sell his pictures. "In middle life he was reduced to great straits; there was nothing to eat; his wife and children clamoured for food. Then he seized brush and paper and composed a small picture; a friend hap-

pened to come in and gave money and rice, declaring himself lucky to possess such a work. This was the beginning of his success."

Tung Ch'i-ch'ang, who has been called the foremost artist of the Ming dynasty, entered official life and rose to be President of the Board of Rites. "He loved calligraphy and painting, and would copy works by the old masters with such eagerness that he forgot to sleep and eat. In his own pictures he embodied the excellencies of the various artists of the Sung and Yüan dynasties in such a way that they became his own; and critics declared that rhythm, finish, grace, and vitality, such as he displayed, were beyond the reach of mortal man." Speaking of himself he said, "When young I studied Huang Kung-wang for landscape, but in middle life I went back to the models of the Sung dynasty. Comparing my pictures with those of Wên T'ung, each will be found to have its own merits and defects. His fineness of brush-work and perfection of form I cannot pretend to rival; while in archaic refinement and finish, I am in advance of him."

Tung Ch'i-ch'ang made all the women of his establishment practise his favourite art. "Each one had her own piece of silk and picture to copy; and if any one showed signs of weariness, he would rate her soundly for it. Among those who bought his works, many obtained pictures painted in the women's apartments." A minor artist, named Ku Ning-yüan, who lived at the close of this dynasty and was a distinguished archaeologist and art-critic, writes thus in his treatise on painting. "From the latter days of the Yüan dynasty (early part of 14th century) down to the beginning of the Ming (1368), the genius of our artists seemed to be exhausted. Between 1465 and 1567 there was a period of revival in my part of the country (Kiangsu), but towards the year 1620 this had entirely disappeared. Then Tung Ch'i-ch'ang arose in Sung-chiang (near Shanghai), richly endowed with a resplendent genius,—a veritable pioneer in art. Alas, those who studied him, failed to fathom the inner purport of his teaching. They did not penetrate beneath the skin and the flesh, attaining only to a vain superficiality, to a force like that of a missile which is spent."

We here take leave of the great artists of the Ming dynasty. There is still however a considerable tail of minor artists, finishing off with the usual selection of Buddhist and Taoist priests, freaks of various kinds, and women. From these a few stray remarks and quaint conceits remain to be gathered in.

Fan Yün-lin said of himself, "I have pictures in my breast, and the devil in my wrist. In my boyhood I gave much attention to art, in the hope of painting Nature in her green robe; and when I failed, I retired and bowed my head over writing, thus giving it up altogether. Now that I am old, I regret my past years. Brush and ink lie idle before me. Even if I do attempt to handle them, I cannot reproduce the true aspect of the blue hills; but I paint away according to my fancy, not without some result for myself, though wandering far from the beaten paths of professional artists. Those who see my work, look upon it as they would upon a stringless lute."

Chu Ying, whose strong point in painting was rhythm, is also said to have "carved wood and bamboo into portraits of Taoist Immortals and of Buddha, of such excellence that critics pronounced them superior to the paintings even of Wu Tao-tzŭ."

Chêng Chung was in many ways a strange being, whose reverence for religious art was out of proportion to his success. "Before taking up his brush to paint a portrait of Buddha, he made a point of fasting and bathing."

Lu Tê-chih, known as a painter of the bamboo, was unfortunate enough to lose the use of his right hand. He then taught himself to paint with his left hand, and achieved even better results.

Ch'ên Hung-shou, "at the age of four, seeing in his grandfather's establishment a newly-whitewashed wall, forthwith climbed upon a table and drew a full-length portrait of the great general Kuan Yü (now the God of War) of the Han dynasty, from eight to nine feet in height."

Hu Ching became a Buddhist priest, and wandered over to the Loo-choo Islands, where he painted many pictures of the beautiful scenery there. These were engraved on wood by himself, in a very delicate and finished style.

Several Taoist Popes are among the crowd of minor artists.

One of them, who called himself the Philosopher of Inaction, in reference to Lao Tzŭ's famous dogma, was forty-fourth in order from Chang Tao-ling, the first Pope, who was taken up to heaven in A.D. 156.

The names of thirty-four women painters are recorded under this dynasty.

For instance: "Madam Ch'iu painted landscape and human figures. Her technique was excellent, and her conceptions were not ordinary; in fact, there was nothing either vulgar or commonplace about her work."

Another lady, named Wên-shu, produced an illustrated album of "all the out-of-the-way flowers, unusual plants, tiny insects, and strange butterflies, which she happened to come across."

Yeh Hsiao-luan "at four years of age had mastered the Elegies of Ch'ü, and composed poetry of her own containing many fine lines. She could paint landscape and reproduce falling petals and flitting butterflies with very rhythmical effects."

Chou Shu-hsi was the younger of two sisters, both artists. She painted a picture of the Langka Mountain in Ceylon, with its demon inhabitants, thus occupying ground beyond the wide domain even of Wu Tao-tzŭ; and one critic went so far as to say that her ten finger-tips glowed with the light of celestial fire.

Among other stories, more or less absurd, the following occur. There was a hermit who could paint pictures on water, because, as he explained, he had discovered a method of preventing the paint from dispersing or sinking to the bottom. One writer declares that he actually saw this feat performed.

There is a story of a lady painted on a screen, who once stepped down and sang a song to an astonished scholar. The latter, regarding the performance as uncanny, *shoo-ed* at the lady, and in a moment she was back on the screen again.

"An artist, named Yüan Hui, went to a Buddhist temple, and painted on one of the walls a picture of a woman with a child. In the night there were sounds as of a baby crying, and the priests spoke to the artist about it. Oh, replied the latter, laughing, I can easily stop that; and he at once took up his brush and painted the woman in the act of suckling the child, after which there was no more crying."

A large number of works on art were produced under the Ming dynasty, some of which have been quoted in the foregoing pages. These include catalogues of private collections, appreciations of pictures, rules for the guidance of amateurs, and almost every imaginable form of composition suitable to the treatment of painting and painters.

The *Shu hua shih* of Ch'ên Chi-ju refers to Ch'êng-tu, the capital of the province of Ssü-ch'uan, as the home of pictorial art under the T'ang dynasty. It is calculated that at the various temples and monasteries in that city there were no fewer than eight thousand five hundred and twenty-four rooms or halls containing frescos by eminent artists, including one thousand two hundred and fifteen pictures of Shâkyamuni and Maitrêya Buddha, ten thousand four hundred and eighty-eight pictures of Bôdhisatvas, sixty-eight pictures of foreign kings and princes, one thousand seven hundred and eighty-five pictures of the Sixteen Lohans and Buddhist Patriarchs, two hundred and sixty-two pictures of dêvas and other deities, and one hundred and fifty-eight pictures of miscellaneous episodes in Buddhist history,—over twenty-two thousand in all.

Wang Shih-chêng (1526—1593) is responsible for the following analysis. "Between the dates of Ku K'ai-chih and Lu T'an-wei, and those of Chang Sêng-yu and Wu Tao-tzŭ, the art of painting human figures underwent a great change (evidently due to Buddhistic influences). The Elder and Younger Li (Li Ssŭ-hsün and Li Shêng) brought about a corresponding change in the art of landscape painting. A further change was made by Ching Hao, Kuan T'ung, Tung Yüan, and Chü Jan; another by Li Ch'êng and Fan K'uan; another by Liu Yüan, Li Lung-mien, Ma Yüan, and Hsia Kuei; and another by Huang Kung-wang and Wang Mêng. Chao Mêng-fu, who was near to the Sung dynasty, excelled in human figures; Shên Chou, who was near to the Yüan dynasty, excelled in landscape."

The same writer also says elsewhere, "A picture will last five hundred years; after eight hundred years, its spirit has fled; after a thousand, there is nothing left."

"The ancients, in their drawings and paintings," writes Ku Yen-wu (1612—1681), "always aimed at the portrayal of events,

which were held up for the admiration or intimidation of the spectator." He then quotes a number of episodes, chiefly national, which were illustrated by painters of antiquity through the various dynasties, until at length, "with the development of monochrome and landscape, this idea, as held by the men of old, altogether disappeared."

It is not proposed to add any account of the painters of the present dynasty, chiefly for lack of materials. There is no authoritative work on art under the Manchu-Tartars, from which a translator could make interesting or important extracts. The *Kuo ch'ao hua chêng lu*, for instance, by Chang Kêng, published in 1739, gives short biographies of one hundred and thirty artists, exclusive of nine Buddhist priests, one Taoist priest, and ten women, followed by a supplement containing lives of seventy-two artists, exclusive of six Buddhist priests and twelve women. But there is no criticism, and nothing which points to a renaissance in pictorial art. There, as in literature, the Chinese are content to look back upon the glories of the past. They have allowed the Japanese, once their pupils, to pass them in the race; and the decadence, which set in under the Mings, is now everywhere accepted with equanimity and resignation. Space, however, must be found for the little there is to be learnt about Chiao Ping-chên, for that little contains probably all that has been published by the Chinese on the subject of art as handled by Europeans.

Chiao Ping-chên was a native of Chi-ning in Shantung, and he had been employed in the Imperial Board of Astronomy. His style was "from near to far, from big to small, (aerial perspective), not slurring over a single hair, according to the method of Western foreigners. He was appointed to office under the Emperor K'ang Hsi, and was employed in reproducing the 46 illustrations of agriculture and weaving (which had been handed down from the 13th century). In these the various details of landscape were so admirably presented, that his Majesty loaded the artist with favours and caused his drawings to be engraved on wood for printing."

Chang Kêng adds, "Under the Ming dynasty there was Li Ma-tou (Matteo Ricci), a native of Europe, who, being able to

speak Chinese, came to the southern capital and lived in the western camp at the Chêng-yang gate. He painted a picture of the Pope, and depicted a woman holding a little child, declaring that this last was a representation of God. The projection and colouring of these were very fascinating; and the artist himself maintained that the Chinese could only paint flat surfaces, consequently there was no projection or depression (relief) in their pictures. We in our country, he said, paint both the light and the dark, so that the result shows projection and depression. A man's full face is light, and the side parts are dark. If the side parts are coloured dark in a picture, the face will appear in relief. Chiao acquired this art, and modified his style accordingly, but the result was not refined and convincing. Lovers of antiquity would do well not to adopt this method."

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ERRATA.

| | | | |
|----|----------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| P. | 3, line 11, | for "Lieh Yü" | read "Lieh I." |
| " | 22, " 13, | " "Tsan" | " "Tsang." |
| " | 32, " 19, | " "Chu-tan" | " "Ch'ü-t'an." |
| " | " " " | " "I-to-li" | " "Kan-to-li." |
| " | 71, " 13, | " " <i>Ming hu lu</i> " | " " <i>Ming hua lu.</i> " |
| " | 149, " 11, | " "Hsin Wei" | " "Hsin Yeh." |
| " | 157, " 6, 17, | " "Yü" | " "Hsü." |
| " | 163, " 10, | " "Yü-chin" | " "Mou-chin." |
| " | 165, " 8, from foot, | " "Hu-tsung" | " "Ch'ao-tsung." |
| " | 168, " 7, " " " | " ^a Hui" | " "Kuai." |

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